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HUGE 196 pages

# AMIGA COMPUTING

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Christmas 1993

AMIGA COMPUTING

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Combine graphics and sound effects with ease!

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AMIGA COMPUTING

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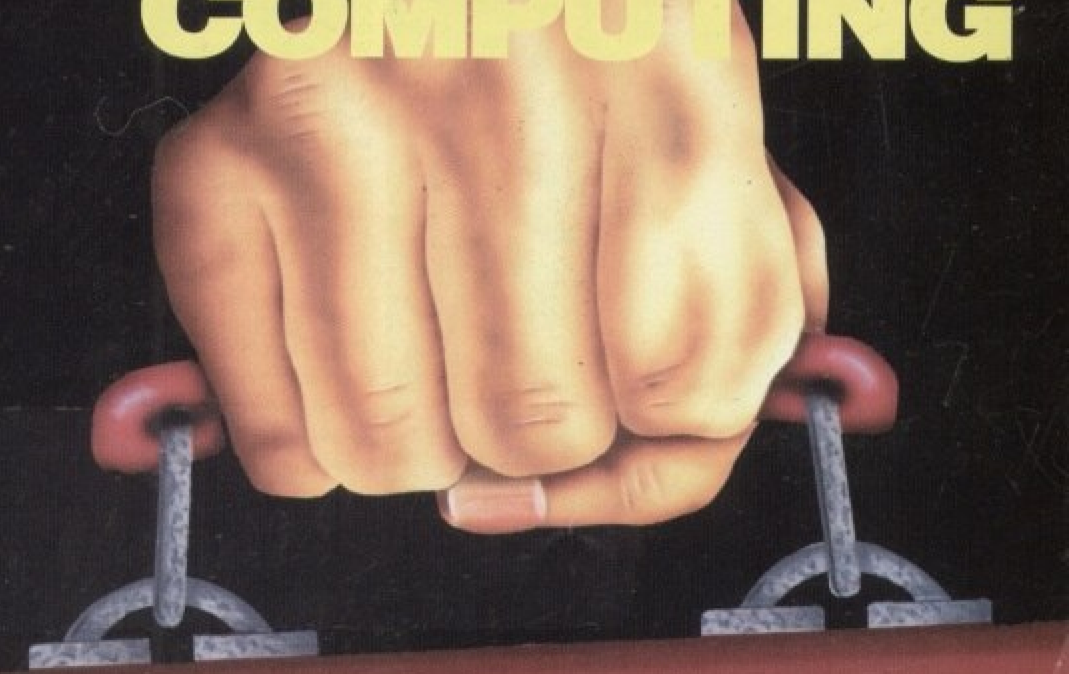
Complete and easy to use paint package

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- *MOUSOMETER Clock those mouse miles
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- DSOUND Direct sound samples
- DRAG BOX Appicon for all uses
- *MAGIC MENU Superb pop-up menu utility

* Not WB 1.3



# BUDGET BUSTER

**Money saving guides for new Amiga users**




**PLUS!**

16 page supplement - best buys for Christmas

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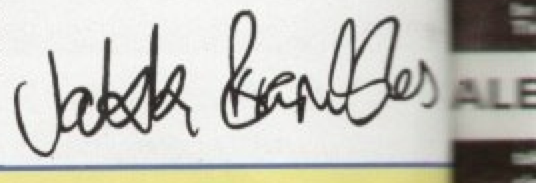
The BBC Radio 1's
TV and Radio presenter



# THE JAKKI BRAMBLES COLUMN

Well OK then you Mums and Dads, it's that time of the year again when letters to Santa are coming your way.
We get a lot of phone calls at this time of year from you guys because it really isn't that easy to decide which of the mega bundles to buy. So this month we have an easy guide to help you make that really important choice.
**Amiga 600 Single Drive** - The ONLY home computer for **less than £200**. Suitable for the child fed up with paying out £40 for software for their Megadrive (software available from £9.99) or for the first time buyer. There are hundreds of software titles available including games, education, word processing, home accounts etc. Games available include strategy / role playing, titles where imagination is more important than aggression, learn to create animations not zap aliens aimlessly. **Age Group 8 - 13**
**A600 Hard Drive** - A more serious version of the above. The hard drive saves repeatedly loading and swapping floppy disks. Suitable for serious games players and applications such as database management for a student or home office environment. The Epic Pack is particularly useful for a foreign language orientated student. **Age Group 12 +**
**Amiga 1200 Desktop Dynamite** - The perfect solution for the student. You want him or her to have a computer to produce school work using quality Desktop Publishing software, he / she wants a dynamic games playing machine. This gives both of you what you are looking for. The software alone is worth over £300.You can expand this computer through the addition of hard drives, extra memory, accelerator boards whatever the option most suitable for producing any number of serious applications. Want to be a graphic artist, video producer, film director, cartoon animator, musician, mathematician, designer..... the only limitation to the machine is your imagination. **Age Group 14+**
**Amiga CD32** - The choice for existing Amiga owners looking for the latest product in the range or for the dedicated console owner. Knocks the Sega for six with its State - of - the - Art graphics. (Colours on screen Sega = 64/ CD32 = 256 or 262,000) and processing speed (Sega = 16-bit / CD32 = 32-bit) To you or me this means that people who write the games can now display more colours on screen and the action can be even faster. Also be aware this is also a Compact disc player with full four voice stereo sound so you can play your favourite CD's when the kids are at school. Connects to standard TVs and most hi - fi's.
**Age Group 10+**
I hope this info assists. With Commodores help I'm certain that there will be thousands of happy smiling faces on Christmas Day, but if you're still not sure give Indi a call they will be delighted to help.

***P.S.** Indi tell me that they are able to extend the **"At Home Service"** on most new Commodore products to a full 3 years for as little as £39.99 through their agreement with **ICL**, the Giant European Warranty Company. Might be worth checking out for that extra peace of mind.*



# BUY NOW PAY 1994!!!!

## AMIGA CD32

FREE SOFTWARE
Lemmings, Oscar, Diggers

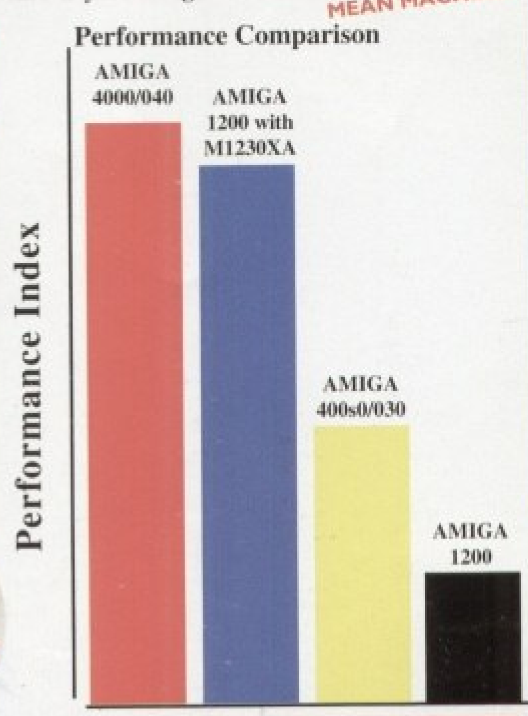



The exterior may be sleek but lurking inside the Amiga CD32 is a technological wonder.
At it's heart is the mightily powerful 68EC020 processor from Motorola. This contains the 32 - bit technology which has made the Amiga 1200 a run-away success throughout Europe.Alongside it is Commodore's unique custom AGA (Advanced Graphics Architecture) chipset - comprising three chips nicknamed Paula, Lisa and Alice.
Together they make Amiga CD32 and awesome powerhouse of high speed graphics and stunning sound capabilities. In fact, the machine can display 256,000 colours on screen (compared to Sega's Mega CD which can only display 64) and has a total colour palette of 16.8 million colours.
Amiga CD32 also comes with a chunky 2 Meg of RAM (that's15 times more than Mega CD) and a double speed drive.

**SPECIFICATIONS:**

* 14 MHZ 68EC020 processor
* 2 Megs 32 - bit chip RAM
* 2 Joystick ports/controller ports
* S- video jack
* Composite video jack
* RF output Jack
* Stereo audio jacks
* Keyboard connector/ auxiliary connector
* Full expansion bus
* Headphone jack
* Headphone volume control
* External brick power supply
* Internal MPEG FMV expansion capability
* Multiple session disc capability

**We've said it before and no appologies for repeating it. Adding an Indi Microbotics M1230XA card to your Amiga 1200 turns it into a** MEAN MACHINE!




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Buy the superb new Amiga 1200 Desktop Dynamite Pack from Indi and we will send it to you for only 10% deposit with the balance over 6 months Interest Free
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If you find an identical product advertised in this magazine at at a lower price than the advertised Indi Price and available for immediate delivery then we will match that price*. Our way of ensuring that Indi customers have the guarantee of the very best service and the lowest price in town.
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so here's an offer that really helps you buy
time for Christmas and spreads the cost ove
next year. Choose any Indi product (or mo
products) valued at over £200, pay 10%deposit and start paying again in 3 months time. **Here's how it works**, choose your products and telephone **Indi on 0543 419999** and ask for Credit Sales. We will a
you a few questions, explain to you what y
will pay and when and then complete our credit check. Within 24 hours we will be a
to clear your order and subject to status deliver your products to you.
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us you have your Bank details handy and th
you satisfy the three main questions:
**1) Are you over 18 years.**
**2) Have you lived in the UK for the past**
**years**
**3) Are you in full time employment.**
If you cannot answer yes to all of these que
tions perhaps the credit agreement would b
in someone elses name if so then they sho
telephone us. Once you are accepted we w
ask for a 10% deposit. If you pay by credi
card we will be able to release the product
straight away, If you send us a cheque, it w
take a few extra days. The only other deci
that you will have to make is do you wish
spread the payments over 6, 12, 18, 24, or
months? **The choice is yours!**

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Until you are 100% certain that any advertis
has the product that you want **in stock** and w
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Far too often Jakki Brambles receives letters
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obtain a refund from an advertiser that has
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INDI is a wholly owned subsidiary of a public company now in it's tenth year of trading and specialising in the supply of computer products.

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The INDI sales team have been trained to

## ALES AND SUPPORT

take your order with the utmost care and efficiency. All stock offered for sale is held in stock, centrally at our group ware house complex and is available for next day delivery, direct to your home or business. If at any time we are out of stock your money will not be banked until the product is available (a point worth checking should you be tempted to purchase elsewhere)

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# AMIGA A1200



NEW AMIGA PACK

## NEW DESKTOP DYNAMITE PACK

**A1200 STANDARD FEATURES.**

* 68020 Processor * PCMCIA Slot. * 2MB Chip RAM. * 3.5" Internal Driv
* AA Chipset * Built in TV modulator. * Alpha numeric keypad.
* 12 Months at home maintenance.

**£349.99** INDI 300003

**FREE**
* Wordworth AGA * Print Manager * Deluxe Paint IV AGA * Oscar AGA
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## AMIGA 1200/030 PROFFESIONAL PACK

(Exclusive to Indi)
"Approx 1.5 times faster than an A4000/030

This is the ultimate power configuration, if your dream is to own the quickest A1200 ever then take a look at this specification:
* Amiga 1200 * 4Mb 32 - bit Fast RAM (Expandible to an Amazing 128 Mb!!) * Microbotics M1230 XA W/50MHZ MMU (Approx 1.5 times faster than an A4000/030!!) * 12 Months "At Home Warranty" * Choice of Hard Drive Capacities * Optional 50MHZ 68882 FPU Maths Processor.

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| 80 Mb Version | £864.91 |
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## WARNING

Some advertisers are fitting 3.5" drives to Amiga 1200. The Amiga was never designed to accept 3.5" drives and fitting one totally invalidates any Commodore Warrenty. Indi only offer official 2.5" IDE drives officially accepted by Wang, ICL and Commodore.

# AMIGA A4000



### It's here - The new Amiga 4000/030

The NEW Amiga 4000/030 features a EC68030 processor running at an incredible 25Mhz, and upgradable at a later date to a faster processor. The 4000/030 has a powerful 2 Mb of 32 - bit RAM expandable to 18 Mb using industry standard 32 - bit Simms module. In line with the Amiga Flagship 4000/040 the 4000/030 features the new AGA graphics chipset, giving you a massive pallet of 16.8 million colours. A range of hard drive options are available from 80 - 240 Mb and includes a SCSI option.

Without a doubt this is the best value A4000/030 configuration in the UK

**4000/030 170Mb HD** INDI PRICE **£999.99**

A full range of approved upgrades are available for the 4000/030, including additional memory modules, hard drives, FPU's (68881 &68882)and the 24 - bit Opal Vision graphics and video system

### NEW MONITOR RANGE

THE NEW DUAL SYNC1942 Monitors have been specially designed for the New Amiga 1200 and 4000 computers. Both monitors feature built - in stereo speakers.

NEW PRICE

INDI 301011

**1942 Monitor £349.99**

14 inch screen size - 0.28 mm dot matrix

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Connect a CDTV player to any Amiga, and access the world of CD - ROM software.The Parnet interface and software will allow the Amiga CDTV to be used as a CD - ROM drive withe any Amiga and will give any Amiga owner access to the vast range of CDTV software currently available.

The CDTV player offers excellent value for money when compared with a standard CD - ROM drive and interface. Most CD - ROM drives will set you back over £400 while CDTV will cost you less than £300 and will play audio CD's in addition to CD - ROM / CDTV disks your Amiga, interface cable and PD disk with driver software for your CDTV player. **(The Parnet adapter can be used to link any Amigas together)**

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# AMIGA A600 PRICE CRASH



**THE WILD THE WEIRD AND THE WICKED** A600 is an ideal starter pack containing a considered mix of software, making the most of the Amigas capabilities.

**PACK CONTAINS:**
* A600 Single Drive
* Built in TV Modulator
* 1 Mb Memory
* Pushover: Grandprix
* Silly Putty: Deluxe Paint III
* Mouse and Manuals

LOW LOW PRICES

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**A600 - SD** A single drive Amiga for those of you requiring a basic A600 at a very competitive price.
**PACK INCLUDES:** A600 single drive, built in TV modulator, 1 Mb memory. 12 Months at home service

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CREDIT AVAILABLE ON 6,12, 18, 24, 36 MONTHS.

WHY NOT RING NOW FOR A QUOTE. SAME DAY RESPONSE.

# AMIGA PERIPHERALS & ACCESSORIES

## NEW FROM MICROBOTICS!!!. M1230XA ACCELERATOR LAUNCH!!

Microbotics beats the competition in price/ performance/ features and configurations. INDI is very pleased to announce the availability of the new 68030 accelerator product for the A1200: the microbotics M1230 XA (call it the "XA" for short). 50 Mhz as standard! Huge 128 MB memory design is standard (the biggest memory space in any A1200 peripheral) just look at these specifications and prices!

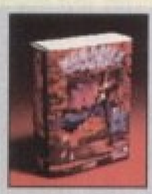
M1230 XA W/40 MHZ EC 030 0MB **INDI PRICE £239.99**
M1230 XA W/40 MHZ EC 030 4MB **INDI PRICE £369.99**
M1230 XA W/40 MHZ EC 030 8MB **INDI PRICE £599.99**
M1230 XA W/50 MHZ MMU 030 0MB **INDI PRICE £319.99**
M1230 XA W/50 MHZ MMU 030 4MB **INDI PRICE £479.99**
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## MBX1200.

The original and best floating point unit and memory upgrade for the Amiga A1200. Available with 0,4 or 8 MB of 32 bit Fast RAM and a choice of floating point units.Now complete with real time clock (RTC)

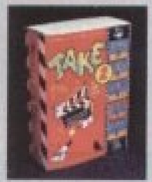
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MBX1200Z 68881 14 MHZ 4MB **INDI PRICE £249.99**
MBX1200Z 68881 14 MHZ 8MB **INDI PRICE £449.99**
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MBX1200Z 68882 50 MHZ 8MB **INDI PRICE £599.99**
68882 FPU UPGRADE 50 MHZ **INDI PRICE £169.99**

## AUDIO VISUAL



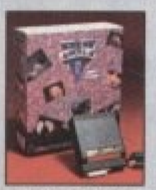
**MEGAMIX.** Low cost, hi spec digital effects cartridge plugs into the printer port of the Amiga. Allows stereo sampling from almost any musical source.

**INDI PRICE £29.99** INDI 350000



**TAKE 2.** Animation package is a must foe computer artists and enthusiasts of all ages. As used in Rolf Harris Cartoon Club.

**INDI PRICE £37.99** INDI 350001

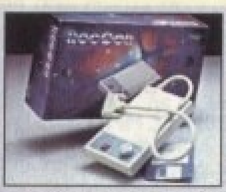


**VIDI AMIGA 12.** The ultimate low cost colour digitiser for the Amiga. "The best value full colour digitiser on the market" AMIGA FORMAT.

**INDI PRICE £74.99** INDI 350002

**ROMBO VIDI AMIGA 24(RT).** For the more serious user, this 24 - bit version will again capture from from any video source with true photo realistic images! A staggering 16.7 million colours can be utilised with incredible results. Full AGA chipset support.

**.INDI PRICE £219.99** INDI 350004



**ROCTEC ROCGEN PLUS.**
As above but with extra features such as tinting and signal inversion. Allows for real time editing of graphics. Compatible with all Amigas.

INDI 350050

**INDI PRICE £129.99**

**ROCTEC ROCKEY.**
The ultimate accessory for Amiga / Video fans. Separate RGB controls to chroma key on any colour.

**INDI PRICE£249.99** INDI 350051

**ROMBO VIDI AMIGA 12(RT).** Based on the best selling Vidi Amiga 12. This all new version offers real time colour capture from any video source. Full AGA chipset support as standard for all A1200 / 4000 users.

**INDI PRICE £129.99** INDI 350003

## DISK DRIVES




**ZAPPO EXTERNAL FLOPPY**
You've seen all the reviews on this popular and affordable second Amiga drive. Compatible with all Amigas.

INDI 350152

**INDI PRICE £49.99**

**Quality: 9 out of10. Exceptional value for money. AMIGA COMPUTING JAN 93**

## AMIGA PERIPHERALS

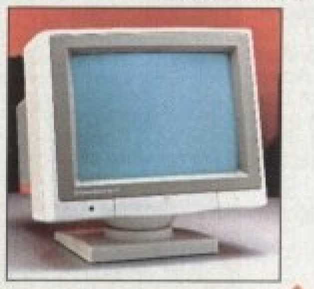


**2MB SMARTCARD.** The original and still the only fully PCMCIA compatible memory card for A600/ A1200.Comes with lifetime guarantee. Beware of cheap imitations.
**INDI PRICE £109.99**
**4MB SMARTCARD.** Same as above but maximum 4MB.
**INDI PRICE £159.99**

**ZAPPO 601**
Trapdoor upgrade for the A600, 1Mb with RTC **INDI PRICE £49.99**
**ZAPPO 601 INC** As above only 512K, no clock **INDI PRICE £29.99**



## 1084S MONITOR.

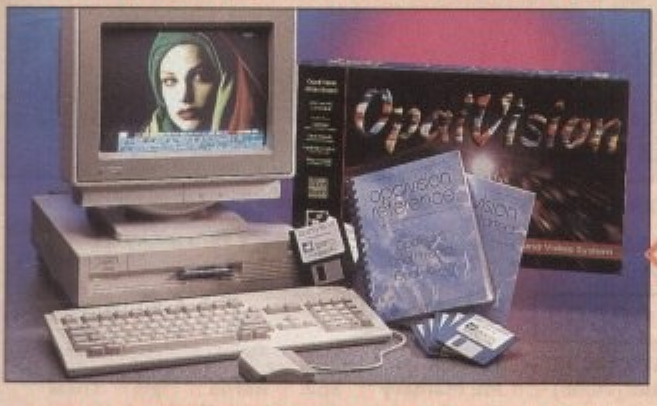


Commodores original and best selling colour stereo monitor.
DOES NOT INCLUDE STAND.

INDI 350014

**£189.99**
**(£179.99 if purchased with A600 / A1200 / A1500)**

# OPAL VISION




## NEW FOR DECEMBER RELEASE!

The already acclaimed Opalvision Board takes three further leaps into the future with the official launch of the Opalvision modules. With truly awesome capabilities the Amiga can now become the most professional 24 - bit video graphics power station ever!

## The NEW OPAL VISION system(Rev.2)

The amazing Opalvision 24 - bit graphics board and software suite has been updated and is now even better value for money.

**The software suite now includes:**

**Opal Paint V2.0** - Now includes full magic wand implementation and Alpha Channel that allows photo compositing with selectable levels on a pixel by pixel basis.The new Chrominance effect allows absolute, real time control of image contrast, brilliance and re - mapping of colours.

**Opal AnimMATE V2.0** - ofering real time play back of animations created by ray tracers, landscape generators, morphers and all other 24 - Bit software.

**Opal Hotkey V2.0** - Display OpalVision graphics anytime with key combinations.

*"Quite simply, it's a spectacular product* - ***Amiga Computing***
*"Undoubtedly the finest, most professional paint program to arrive on the Amiga"* - ***Amiga Format***
*"Professonal quality at this Price can't be turned away"* - **Amiga User International**
*"The verdict was unanimous - brilliant"*
***- Amiga Shopper***

INDI 350250

**£349.99**

Exclusive Indi Price

## MORPH PLUS

You've seen Micheal Jackson's video, you've seen the television adve[rts] using the latest techniques in morphing, now now you can create th[e] same results but at a fraction of the cost. Morph Plus is the latest an[d] the ultimate in this technology. Whether you are a professional arti[st] or just want to experiment at home Morph Plus is a must.

**INDI PRICE £109.99** INDI 350200




## DELUXE PAINT IV AGA

Combines powerful tools with an intuitive interface so both professionals and beginners alike can get superb results quickly. New enhancements to the software include the ability to paint and anima[te] in 4696 colours in the Amiga's HAM (Hold and Modify)mode. New animation features also include metamorphosis allowing you to chan[ge] one image into another. You determine the number of frames and DPaint IV does the rest.

**INDI PRICE £61.99** INDI 350201

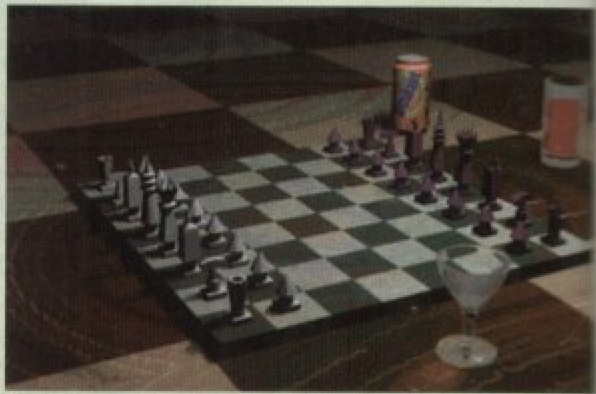
## ART DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONAL

The ultimate in image processing providing many key benefits to Am[iga] users working with pictures.With ADPro you can read, write and co[n]vert between most common image file formats with unmatched flexi[bility]. Full support for JPEG image makes it possible to maintain an image library in full 24 - bit colour without needing massive hard dr[ive] storage. Typically a 600 Kb image can be compressed down to 40 K[b].

**INDI PRICE £132.99** INDI 350202

## REAL 3D V2

Is a full featured 3D animation, modelling amd rendering program. With Real 3D V2 you can produce high quality images and animation[s] of three dimensional models with an astonding level of realism. Imag[ine] creating an animation that shows a handfull of balls bounce down a flight of stairs to the bottom. Gravity, colliision, deflection and the el[as]ticity of the balls are all automatically calculated by the program!



**INDI PRICE£299.99** INDI 350203

## SCALA Multimedia 200 (MM200)

Is the ultimate on professional video titling. The eminent design of typefaces, the unlimited choice of typographical details, the high reso[lu]tion and the more than 80 exciting wipes result in video captioning of exquisite quality. No wonder that Scala is used by leading television stations around the world.

INDI 350204

**INDI PRICE £139.99** also available

## SCALA HOME TITLER

**INDI PRICE £84.99** INDI 350205

## VIDEO DIRECTOR

With Video Director, anyone with an Amiga, a camcorder and a VCR can quickly and easily catalogue and edit the best moments from their video tapes. Video Director is extremely easy to use, you can actually control your camcorder and VCR from your Amiga screen . Video Director comes with everything you need to get started. The hardware to control your camcorder* and VCR is included

**INDI PRICE £119.99** INDI 350206

*Camcorder must have a LANC or Control L compatible port

Professional software is imported and sometimes subject to delay. Confirm delivery at time of order.

**TEL: 0543 419 999 FAX: 0543 418 079**

*TERMS AVAILABLE OVER 6, 12, 24, & 36 MONTHS SUBJECT TO STATUS.*

*WHY NOT RING FOR A QUOTE. SAMEDAY RESPONSE. (SEE EXAMPLE)*

# Panasonic *Quiet* Colour Printing

We researched the colour printer market at great depth to find a colour printer good enough to cope with Amiga's powerful output, yet at an affordable price.
We found the perfect printer in the KX - P2180 and KX - P2123 quiet printers.
We then considered that if you were going to buy a Panasonic printer you would probably need a quality word processing package to use with it. We found that too, with 'Wordworth' yet at a retail price of £129.99 we thought that might be a little too expensive on top of your printer purchase! So together with Panasonic we decided to give a copy of 'Wordworth' free with every Panasonic printer. How's that for added value?

## Panasonic KX - P2180



***WORDWORTH AGA COMPLETELY FREE!**
**WITH PANASONIC QUIET PRINTERS.** The writers choice. The ultimate word processor for AMIGA computers. Wordworth is undoubtedly the ultimate word / document processor for the full range of AMIGA computers. The graphical nature of WORDWORTH makes producing documents faster and easier, with the enhanced printing fonts (including full Panasonic KX - P2180 and KX - P2123 colour printing support), Collins spell checker and thesaurus, no other word processor comes close. "Without doubt this is one of the best document processors for the AMIGA, Today" (Amiga Format)
**NORMAL RRP £129.99 inc. VAT**

INDI 320000

**£169.99**

The new Panasonic KX - P2180 9 -pin quiet printer. Produces crisp clear text in mono or in 7 glorious colours with new quiet technology. THe new KX - P2180 is typically 15dBa quieter in operation, than the competition.

* **Fast Printing** Speeds 192 CPS NLQ
* **Colour Printing** 7 colour palette (blue, red, green, yellow, violet, magenta,black)
* **Quiet printing** Super quiet 45 - 48 dBa sound level (most matrix printers are typically in excess of 60 dBa)
* **6 Resident Fonts** Over 6,100 type styles using Courier Prestige, Bold PS, Roman, Script and Sans Serif Fonts.
* **3 Paper Paths** Paper handling from bottom, top and rear for total flexibility
* **1 Year Warranty** for total peace of mind

## Panasonic KX - P2123




INDI 320001

**£219.99**

The new high performance Panasonic KX - P2123 24 pin. Quiet colour printer offers leading edge quiet printing technology at an affordable price

* **Fast Printing Speeds** 192 CPS draft, 64 CPS LQ and 32 SLQ.
* **Colour Printing** 7 colour palette (blue, red, green, yellow, violet, magenta, black)
* **Quiet Printing** Super quiet 43.5 - 46 dBa sound level (most matrix printers are typically in excess of 60 dBa)
* **7 Resident Fonts** Over152,000 type styles using Super LQ, Courier Prestige, Bold PS, Roman, Script, and Sans Serif Fonts.
* **24PIN Diamond** Printhead High performance and high quality output
* **1 Year Warranty** for total peace of mind.

# Panasonic LASER PRINTER

## KX - P4410 LASER PRINTER





WORDWORTH AGA COMPLETELY FREE WITH PANASONIC LASER PRINTERS. The writers choice. The ultimate word processor for AMIGA computers NORMAL RRP £129.99 inc VAT

## KX - P4430 LASER PRINTER



Once again INDI have joined together with Panasonic to offer all Amiga owners the most outstanding Laser Printer offer ever. We are now able to offer high quality, professional laser printing at affordable prices. We are also giving away a copy of Wordworth with every Panasonic Laser Printer purchased (RRP £129.99). Whether you are looking for a laser printer to handle word processing, DTP, presentation or complex graphic applications - the Panasonic range offers you the power to meet your requirements.

### KXP - 4410

SAVE £50

* 5 pages per minute
* 28 resident fonts
* Optional 2nd input bin(total printer capacity 2 x 200 sheets)
* Low running costs
* Parallel interface
* Optional memory expansion to 4.5 Mb (0.5 as standard)
* HP laserJet II Emulation

INDI 320002

NEW LOW PRICES!

**£499.99** inc. VAT

WORDWORTH AGA COMPLETELY FREE WITH LASER PRINTERS

Panasonic 2 YEAR ON-SITE WARRANTY

### KXP - 4430

SAVE £50

* Satinprint (optimum resolution technology)*
* 5 Pages per minute
* HP Laserjet III Emulation, PCL 5
* 8 Scalable fonts & 28 bitmap functions
* Optional 2nd input bin (total printer capacity 2 x 200 sheets
* Optional memory expansion to 5.0 Mb (1 Mb as standard)

INDI 320003

NEW LOW PRICES!

**£649.99** inc. VAT

*(Satinprinters use optimum resolution technology to produce truly outstanding print quality. This software technique smooths away traditional jagged edges on curved characters and lines by varying the printed dot size

WORDWORTH AGA COMPLETELY FREE WITH LASER PRINTERS

# Panasonic PRINTER ACCESSORIES



1) **PANASONIC AUTOMATIC SHEET FEEDER**
Automatic sheet feeder for KXP 2180/ KXP 2123 holds 80 A4 sheets. **INDI PRICE £89.99**

2) **PRINT DUST COVER**
Specially tailored quality dust cover for Panasonic KXP 2180/ KXP 2123 printer. **INDI PRICE £8.99**

3) **PRINTER STAND**
2 piece printer stand. **INDI PRICE £9.99**

4) **PAPER PACK**
500 sheets quality A4 paper. **INDI PRICE £9.99**

5) **CONTINUOUS PAPER**
2000 sheets 1 part listing paper. **INDI PRICE £19.99**

6) **PARALLEL PRINTER CABLE**
To be used when connecting Amiga to Panasonic printers. **INDI PRICE £8.99** (£5.99 if purchased with a printer)

7) **PANASONIC COLOUR RIBBON**
Colour ribbon for KXP 2180/ KXP 2123. **INDI PRICE£18.99**

8) **PANASONIC BLACK RIBBON**
Black ribbon for KXP 2180/ KXP 2123. **INDI PRICE £9.99**

### SAVE ££££'S ON THE FOLLOWING ACCESSORY PACKS

**PACK 1**
**PANASONIC COLOUR RIBBON PACK**
Contains 6 colour ribbons for the KXP 2123 RRP £119.99.
**INDI PRICE £89.99** SAVE £30!!!

**PACK 2**
**PANASONIC RIBBON PACK**
Contains 2 black and 4 colour ribbons for KXP 2180/ KXP 2123.RRP £99.99.
**INDI PRICE£69.99** SAVE £30!!!

**PACK 3**
**PANASONIC DELUXE ACCESSORY PACK**
Contains automatic sheet feeder, 2 black ribbons, 2 colour ribbons, 1 dust cover, 2 piece printer stand. RRP £169.99 **INDI PRICE £139.99** SAVE £30

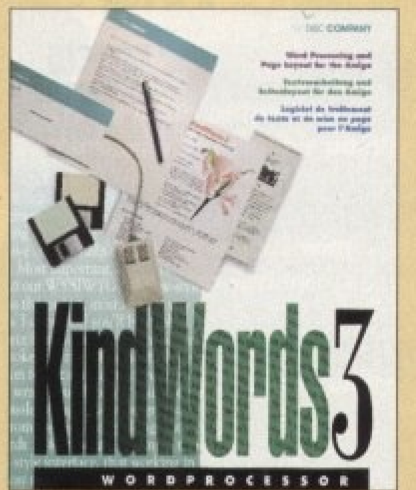
Add £2.50 carriage to all printer accessories or combinations thereof

**TEL: 0543 419 999 FAX: 0543 418 079**

# Best-Selling Amiga Titles at Amazing Prices.

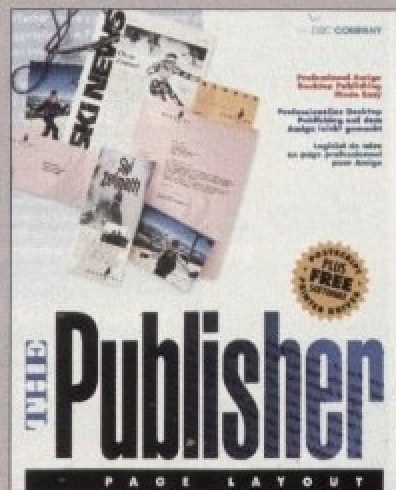
## KindWords3
WORDPROCESSOR

An essential requirement for the office and your home! The friendliest word processor you'll ever use. Simple enough to have you working in minutes and yet sophisticated enough to provide all the features you need for your resumés, reports, correspondence and all your writing projects. Page layout, mailing list merge and a variety of other up-to-date functions make KindWords the right choice for users of all ages.

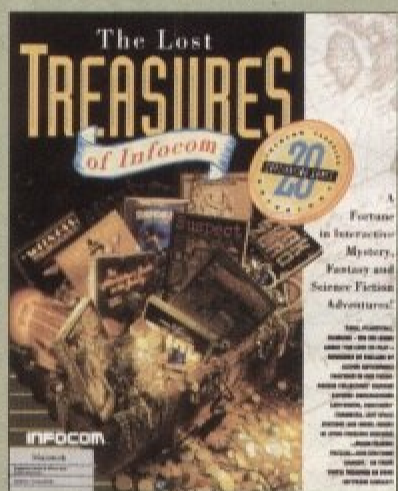



## THE Publisher
PAGE LAYOUT

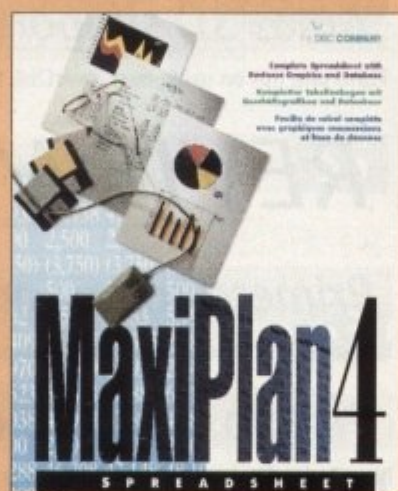
This tremendously powerful desktop publishing program offers unrivaled output, ultra-fast operation and a wide variety of superb special effects you never imagined using. This publishing system lets you design and create professional-looking documentation efficiently and effortlessly. Now you can create the perfect page layouts for your leaflets, ads, newsletters or novels, with infinite ease!




## The Lost TREASURES of Infocom




Round out your computer game library with a fortune of interactive mystery, fantasy and science fiction adventures you'll be sure to treasure in one value-packed collector's edition! Enjoy spine-tingling suspense and brain-teasing puzzles in such big-name games as *Zork*, *Planetfall* and *Deadline.* Dare to solve murder cases, discover lost pyramids, break mysterious curses, and rendezvous with alien vessels in your favorite Infocom adventures!




## MaxiPlan4
SPREADSHEET

This acclaimed spreadsheet, database and charting program lets you take control of all your number and data tasks! Tackle financial analysis, database lists and marketing research with the accuracy and speed your projects require. Organize, calculate and present your data clearly and graphically with colorful charts all in one multi-use program. Save time and energy by automating repetitive or tedious tasks with our simple macros command and more!

Now you can get four of the all-time best-selling Amiga programs for amazingly lower prices.
For more information please call 0295 252 524.

| KindWords 3 | The Publisher | The Lost Treasures *of Infocom* | MaxiPlan 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| NOW ONLY £29.99 | NOW ONLY £29.99 | NOW ONLY £29.99 | NOW ONLY £29.99 |



THE DISC COMPANY
A DIVISION OF ACTIVISION

# CONTENTS

AMIGA insight

## Nine pages for enquiring minds

*The most authoritative monthly columns in the business, covering all areas of specialised Amiga activity*

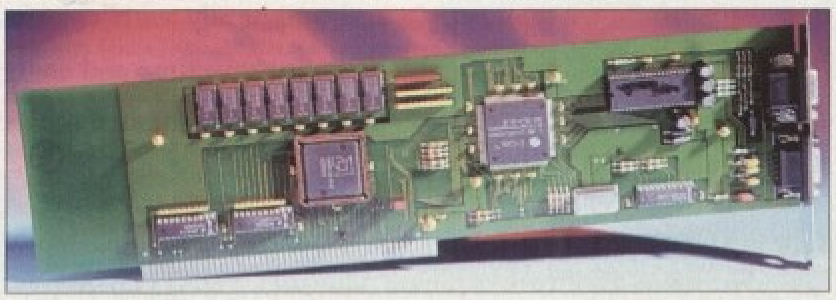


## FEATURES



## REVIEWS







## GAMER

*Brilliant, bright, breezy, bracing, brisk, and bodacious, Gamer is the only games section you'll ever need. It's really rather good.*



### GAME REVIEWS



## Amiga Market

*The monthly roundup of the best hardware and software around, classified ads, buying tips, and lots more*

NEXT MONTH ON SALE NOV 16th DEC

## The COVERDISKS




**Two disks packed with commercial and shareware software to suit every taste**

**TAKE 2**

**Superb animation editing program for all Amigas**

**FUSION PAINT**

*Create icons, pictures, and more with this flexible painter*

**Magic Menu**
*Replace your menus with the 3D pop-up variety*

**DropBox**
*Multi-purpose AppIcon utility*

**DSound**
*Samples direct from hard disk*

**Error**
*Unravel the mysteries of the AmigaDOS error message*

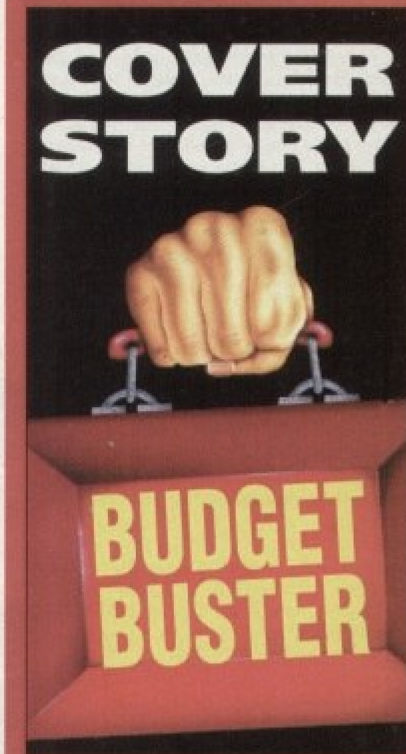
**Move**
*New DOS command to make life easier*

**Army Miner**
*Silky smooth version of the classic puzzle game*

**Mousometer**
*A hack to measure how far your mouse moves*

**Turn to page 22**

## COVER STORY




**16-page supplement packed with the best buying advice for Amiga owners this Christmas, all backed up by two round-ups and a survival guide!**

- *floppies*
- *monitors*
- *RAM*
- *printers*
- *essential software*
- *consumer rights*

**and lots more!**
**Starts page 67**

# REGULARS



## Competition

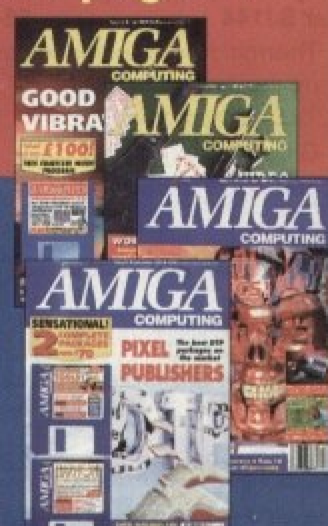


*Win a guided tour round a London CD32 development centre!*

## Subscriptions

*Choose the option that will suit you best - either a 12 issue or a quarterly subscription, with small direct debit payments.*

*This month we'll even make a donation to Children in Need on your behalf*



# Ladbroke Computing

33 Ormskirk Rd,
Preston, Lancs,
PR1 2QP

Ladbroke Computing International are one of the longest established home computer dealers in the U.K. We have developed an extensive customer service policy which involves testing of all hardware prior to despatch to ensure that goods arrive in working order, offering free advice and support over the phone and keeping customers informed. Although our prices are not always the cheapest we do endeavour to offer consistently good service and backup.

All prices/specifications are correct at copy date 1/11/93 (while stocks last), and are subject to change without prior notice. All prices include VAT but exclude delivery.

**How to Pay**
You can order by mail Cheques/Postal Orders made payable to Ladbroke Computing. Or give your credit card details over the phone.

**Delivery**
Postal delivery is available on small items under £40 (Normally £3, phone for details). Add £7 for courier delivery. Next working day delivery on mainland UK subject to stock (£20 for Saturday delivery).

Open Mon-Sat 9.30am to 5.00pm.
Ladbroke Computing Ltd trading as Ladbroke Computing International.

*Fax: (0772) 561071*
*Tel: 9am-5.30pm (5 Lines)*
*(0772) 203166*

## Printers



*Star*

| | |
|---|---|
| Star LC100 Colour | £165.00 |
| Star LC20 | £124.00 |
| Star LC24/100 Mono | £179.00 |
| Star LC24/30 Colour | £249.00 |

- Built in 55 sheet feeder
- 24 Pin Colour

| | |
|---|---|
| Starjet SJ48 Bubblejet | £210.00 |
| Star SJ144 | £549.00 |

- Thermal max transfer colour printer
- 144 element head
- Glossy colour output
- 360 dpi resolution

*Citizen*

**Citizen Swift 240 Colour** £270.00

*Hewlett Packard*

| | |
|---|---|
| HP Deskjet 510 | £299.00 |
| HP Deskjet 500 Colour | £299.00 |

*Lasers*

**Ricoh LP1200** £699.00

**Add £3 for Centronics cable and £7 for next working day courier delivery.**

## GVP II Hard Drives




- Quantum SCSI Hard drive
- Ultra fast 11ms access
- Up to 8Mb RAM on board
- 2 year warranty

| | |
|---|---|
| 42Mb No RAM | £199.00 |
| 80Mb No RAM | £299.00 |

**SPECIAL OFFER**

*170MB NO RAM*
*£349*
*240MB NO RAM*
*£399*

| | |
|---|---|
| 2Mb SIMM Upgrade | £69.99 |
| 4Mb SIMM Upgrade | £139.99 |

## GVP 286 Emulator

- 16MHz 286 PC Emulator
- Norton rating 15
- Plugs into GVP II HD's

**GVP PC-286 Emulator** £89.00

## A500+ Accelerators

- Quantum SCSI Hard drive
- 40MHz 68030 Accelerator
- FPU expansion slot

| | |
|---|---|
| A530 42Mb | £389.00 |
| A530 80Mb | £489.00 |

**SPECIAL OFFER**

*A530 170MB*
*£579*
*A530 240MB*
*£659*

## GVP Genlock

- Video processor provides real time software control of brightness, contrast, saturation, hue, sharpness, filtering, gain etc.
- Audio processor with two audio inputs, software switchable or mixable, with software control of Volume, Bass and Treble effects.

**G-Lock Genlock** £284.00

## A1200 Hard Drives

- Plugs into internal IDE expansion
- Ribbon cable exits through PCMCIA slot
- Warning fitting voids warranty

**170Mb** £249

**Phone for higher capacities.**

## Amiga Packs

**Amiga A600 Lemmings Pack** £184.99
Includes A600 with 1Mb RAM, Lemmings

**Amiga 600 Wild, Weird and Wicked Pack** £194.99
Includes A600 with Pushover, Microprose Grand Prix, Putty and Deluxe Paint III

**A1200 Race & Chase** £289.99
Includes A1200 with 2Mb RAM. Trolls and Nigel Mansell

**A1200 Desktop Dynamite** £349.99
Includes A1200 with 2Mb RAM, Digita Wordworth, Digita print manager, Deluxe Paint IV, Dennis, Oscar

**Amiga CD32** £289.99
2Mb RAM. Dual Speed CD ROM. Multi session, plays music CD's, 256000 colours on screen, includes 2 games Oscar and Diggers.

**Amiga 4000 030** £999.00
Includes A4000, 030 processor, 2Mb Chip RAM, 80Mb Hard drive.



## Speed Mouse

- 290dpi resolution
- 2 Microswitched buttons
- Opto/Mechanical mechanism
- Switchable between Amiga/ST
- Direct Mouse Replacement

**Speed Mouse**
**£11.99**

## Floppy Drives

- 880K formatted capacity
- Double sided, Double density
- Through port

| | |
|---|---|
| Cumana CAX 354 | £54.99 |
| Amiga 500 internal drive | £49.99 |

## RAM Upgrades

**A500 512K upgrade**
**£14.99**
**A500+ 1Mb upgrade**
**£19.99**
**A600 1Mb with clk**
**£39.99**

Plugs straight into A600 trap door compatible with A600, A600HD

## A1230 Accelerator

- 40MHz 68030 accelerator
- Makes your Amiga 1200 run over 7 times quicker.
- Allows up to 32Mb RAM
- Optional FPU

| | |
|---|---|
| A1230/0Mb/No FPU | £239.00 |
| A1230/4Mb/No FPU | £379.00 |
| A1230/4Mb/68882 FPU | £479.00 |

## Monitors



**Philips 8833 MKII** £199.99
Includes 12 Months on site warranty (Mainland UK)

**Samsung C13352X** £179.99
14" SCART input TV with remote control and on screen display (requires SCART cable for high quality display)

**Samsung C15322X** £249.99
20" TV with SCART input for high quality display of computer output. Features remote control, on screen displays, Auto tuning

**Microvitech 1440** £399.99
The Microvitec 1440 is a multisync monitor compatible with the A1200. Includes setup memory for different resolutions.

**Colour SVGA Monitor** £229.99
High quality Colour SVGA Monitor .28 dot pitch.

| | |
|---|---|
| A1200 VGA adaptor | £14.99 |
| Falcon VGA Adaptor | £9.99 |
| Philips SCART to Amiga | £9.99 |
| 8833 MKII to Amiga | £9.99 |

## Falcon 030

- 16MHz 32 bit 68030 Central Processor, 16MHz Blitter, 32MHz 56001 Digital Signal Processor
- 1.44Mb 3.5" Floppy, up to 14Mb RAM. Displays 65536 colours from 262144 palette
- 8 Channel, 16 bit, high quality Stereo sound sampling

| | |
|---|---|
| FALCON 1Mb No HD | £499.00 |
| FALCON 4Mb No HD | £699.00 |
| FALCON 4Mb 64Mb HD | £799.00 |
| FALCON 4Mb 127Mb HD | £899.00 |
| FALCON 4Mb 209Mb HD | £999.00 |
| Falcon Screen Blaster | £89.00 |

## Repair Services

Our Service department can repair Amiga's in minimum time at competitive rates. We can arrange for courier pickup and return delivery of your machine to ensure it's safety. We even have a same day service which will ensure your machine is given priority and subject to fault, completed the same day. We offer a Quotation service for £15 for which we will examine your machine and report back with an exact price for repair. If you do not wish to go ahead with the repairs then just pay the £15. However if you do go ahead then the charge is included in the minimum charge. Please note: The minimum charge covers labour, parts are extra.

| | |
|---|---|
| Quotation service | £15.00 |
| Min repair charge | £35.25 |
| Courier Pickup | £11.00 |
| Courier Return | £7.00 |
| Same day service | £15.00 |

# NEWS

**by John Butters**

# Game delays lose CD32 sales




***CD32: Games not appearing on schedule***

SALES of Commodore's CD32 console are being lost because games promised for the system are not appearing on time, *Amiga Computing* can.

More than 40 titles were originally promised for the machine by Christmas, but we have learned that launch dates are slipping on many.

At the time of going to press only a handful were available, although Commodore had earlier expected 18 to have been on sale by the end of September.

Many are now promised within the next few weeks, but without high quality software on sale during the early Christmas buying period, some shoppers are turning to alternative systems.

Sega and Nintendo have just unveiled new packs and although their machines offer lower specifications, console buyers are being attracted by their huge software catalogues.

Darren Booth, the assistant manager at one electronics store in Manchester, told us that some customers who look first at the CD32 are then buying a Sega or Nintendo console. He said people are impressed by the number of games available – and especially Sega titles Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat – although he was satisfied with CD32 sales so far.

Of the developers, Millennium have stuck close to their plans but several others we spoke to blamed development delays as the main reason for late launches.

Three titles will appear from Ocean Software before Christmas – at CD32's launch they had promised six.

The firm's spokesman Steven Hayes said legal complications are holding back the release of Jurassic Park and CD32-specific titles are taking longer to program than planned.

Thalion's Tony King, meanwhile, said his company have scrapped plans to support the console, although the rights to Lionheart have been passed to another software house.

And at System 3 operations manager Tim Best said: "We are certainly making a heavy commitment to CD32 – but we're not rushing into it."

He explained the firm will be launching at least one game in the next few weeks but certainly not the four Commodore claim are due from the company by the end of the year.

Several other companies reported products in the final stages of development, although said production of some had slipped. Gremlin, one of the biggest CD32 developers, were unavailable for comment.

Commodore spokesman Tim Green was unaware of the delays and expected around 40 CD32-specific titles to be available by Christmas as planned.

## Word processing takes the professional route

THE publishers of Amiga word processors Final Copy II and Pen Pal claim their latest package produces documents as professionally as expensive PC and Apple Macintosh systems.

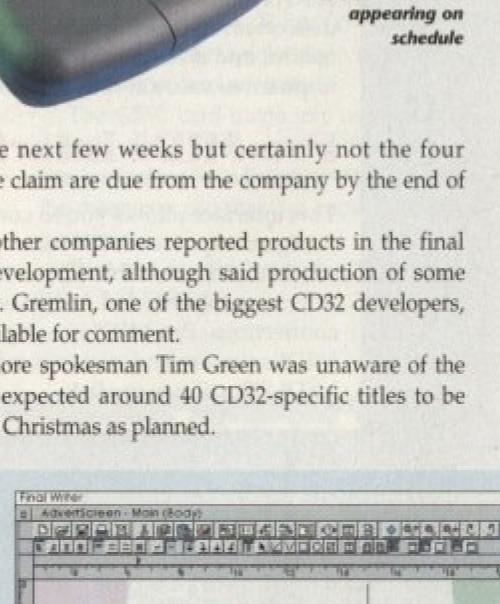
SoftWood's (0773 836781) Final Writer uses one-touch Command buttons to enable the user to create documents easily, with many functions accessed by a mouse click. Its features include auto-indexing, a table of contents, a table of illustrations, spelling checker, thesaurus and several graphics functions.

It has a comprehensive range of print options and uses PostScript font outlines for high quality output without the need for a PostScript laser printer.

But people using such a machine will find a range of extra benefits, such as thumbnails – small icons showing how the document will print – scaling, half toning and crop marks.

The £129.95 package comes with more than 100 typefaces and 100 EPS clip art images. It needs at least 1.5Mb of memory and a hard drive.

● See how Final Writer matches up to the competition in our word processor round-up starting on page 32




***Final Writer: Meeting professional standards***

# More Good News from Microdeal

## Music

### Clarity16

*version 1.5*

New

Clarity16 is our premier, professional sound sampler allowing rates up to 32KHz in 16 bit stereo and up to 48KHz in 16 bit mono on a standard Amiga; accelerated machines can handle faster sampling rates.

The software provides extensive features including full edit control, a MIDI keyboard emulator, a sample sequencer, many special effects, FFT analysis and much more.

New Version 1.5 has an up-to-date Workbench 3 look, in its own window and includes many enhancements allowing full compatibility with faster Amigas.

### Megalosound

New

Our brand-new, 8-bit stereo, direct-to-disk budget sampler is now shipping.

The Megalosound software is packed full of easy-to-use editing features, special effects and extras such as the ability to print waveforms and sample information.

The package allows sampling up to 84KHz mono and 56KHz stereo to memory and up to 21KHz stereo to hard disk on an A1200. Supplied with a hardware volume control and an extensive 144-page manual, Megalosound is impressive value at only £34.95.

### Pro-MIDI Interface

This interface allows you to connect a MIDI system to any Amiga computer via the serial port of your machine using a single multi-core cable. The interface sits conveniently next to your computer and provides MIDI In, Thru and two Out connections. Pro-MIDI is compatible with all leading Amiga MIDI software and comes complete with a miscellany of MIDI PD utilities on disk.

## Video

New



### VideoMaster AGA

VideoMaster combines the beauty of a video digitiser, the fun of a sound sampler and some superb sequencing software to provide a true *Multimedia* system that is a joy to use. This is the *one* package that you need for producing high quality stills & 25 frames/second movies with sound!

New A1200/A600 version. Previously, only A500 owners have been able to take advantage of VideoMaster; now A1200 and A600 users can work with this amazing package and enjoy brand-new features such as superb HAM 8 (A1200 only) and 640x512 digitised stills and 160x100 25 *frames per second* monochrome video with sound. VideoMaster AGA plugs into the PCMCIA slot thus leaving your Amiga free for further expansion.

### ColourMaster

New

To complement the VideoMaster system, we have developed a high quality RGB colour splitter which allows you to automatically digitise full colour movies/stills, directly from the VideoMaster software. The splitter is packaged with VideoMaster RGB.

*The picture above is an un-retouched shot taken outside Microdeal's offices with a Panasonic camcorder and digitised with ColourMaster and VideoMaster AGA, all within a few seconds!*

### Prices

| | |
|---|---|
| *Clarity16* | *£149.95* |
| *Megalosound* | *£34.95* |
| *Pro-MIDI Interface* | *£24.95* |
| *VideoMaster AGA* | *£79.95* |
| *VideoMaster RGB* | *£139.95* |
| *ColourMaster* | *£69.95* |

microdeal

VISA

*All Microdeal products should be available from your local Amiga computer shop. In case of difficulty, you can order directly from Microdeal using your credit/debit card over the phone or by sending us a cheque/postal order. For more information on any of our products which includes HiSoft software (e.g. Devpac Amiga 3, HighSpeed Pascal, SAS/C 6 etc.), please call Microdeal on +44 (0) 525 713671, or fax us on +44 (0) 525 713716 or write to us at: The Old School, Greenfield, Bedford MK45 5DE UK.*

# News Briefs

## More storage inside

FOLLOWING the success of their external 1.76Mb high density disk drive, Power Computing (0234 843388) have developed an internal version for all Amigas. It costs around £80.

## Render price bender

CALIGARI have slashed the price of rendering and animation package Caligari 24 in a bid to oust competitor Real 3D from its market stranglehold.

Meridian Software (081-543 3500) will be selling the state-of-the-art system for £99.95, while they have announced a £329.95 price tag for Caligari Broadcast.

## CBM to go live

COMMODORE have confirmed they will be exhibiting at next year's Live 94 consumer electronics show following the overwhelming success of the first event held recently in London.

It was the company's first chance to show the public their CD32 console which, say Commodore, was a key attraction throughout the five days.

## Going to film

ALTERNATIVE Image (0533 440041) are now able to output common Amiga image files to 35mm film. Prices vary depending on the number of pictures – for one file the cost is £6.

## Scanner mix-up

A COUPLE of errors slipped into last month's scanner round-up. The Migraph Colourburst sells for £399 and the AlfaData and Migraph range are distributed by Golden Image (081-518 7373).

## Power take on genlocks

POWER Computing (0234 843388) are set to take on distribution of Lola genlocks MiniGen and MiniGen Pro. Prices will be £49.95 and £149.95 respectively.

# Printer maker targets Amiga

CITIZEN are set to target the Amiga market as part of a new strategy aimed at making the firm one of Europe's key printer suppliers.

They will make hi-spec, low-cost, colour-capable models for office and home users, and have already announced details of new products for that section of the market.

The ProJet II inkjet offers laser-quality output at 300 dots per inch and speeds of three pages per minute in draft and two pages per minute in letter-quality mode.



*ProJet II: Low running costs a big strength*

The £304 machine contains three letter quality fonts – Courier, Letter Gothic and Times Nordic – and a built-in sensor which detects when ink is running low.

But Citizen see one of the machine's biggest strengths in its low running costs – claimed to be two pence per page.

"Separating the ink cartridge from the print head allows the cartridge to be replaced 12 times on average within the life of a single print head," said marketing manager Julie Haswell. "This keep running costs substantially lower than many other inkjet printers, where the head is disposed of at the end of the life of each cartridge."

A colour version of ProJet II will be released early next year, at which time the firm will also launch ABC, an "ultra-low end" dot matrix machine targeted at first time printer buyers.

It will come with Amiga software designed to help newcomers get started and automatically install drivers, and have a print speed of 192 characters per second in draft mode.

In letter quality mode the speed will be 72cps, and users of the £233 machine will have a choice of five fonts. An optional colour kit will cost £29.99.

# Top graphics come on card

A 32-BIT graphics card has been launched for Amiga users who want to give their computer broadcast-quality paint, 3D modelling, morphing and computer-aided design capabilities.

Director II features 24-bit live image capture, a digitally-designed genlock in 525 or 625 lines giving improved stability and scrolling of full screen 24-bit pictures.

It contains 4Mb of VRAM and 4Mb CPU DRAM as well as an on board TMS34020 processor with optional co-processor. An expansion port enables extra memory and accessories to be fitted.

Output can be scrolled from an internal buffer of 1,024 x 1,024 pixels in 32-bit, and horizontal resolution is programmable from 640 to 1,500 pixels.

Cost, £2,226 from Tritec Marketing 081-991 5591.

# CD quality sound on a budget

DIGITAL Audio Designs have developed a high resolution budget 16-bit sound system that is claimed to improve the Amiga's sound to CD and DAT recorder quality.

Wavetools uses the computer's hard disk drive to record, edit, mix and play back audio, has a frequency response of 10Hz to 20kHz and a dynamic range of 85dB.

It employs 64x oversampled Sigma-Delta conversion technology and comes with a pair of stereo I/O jacks for linking to any device with standard Line In and Line Out connectors.

Voice-overs and other sound effects can be added to produce clear audio tracks for special productions.

Multiple waveform windows can be open at the same time and sound cut and pasted between open files to help build complex audio tracks.

There is support for digital mixing of unlimited numbers of tracks, and using Wavetools' mixer it is possible to layer sound upon sound to make high quality full audio tracks.

A range of editing and mixing features are available including overdubs, perform, ADR and the ability to place sound effects at specified points in the track.

An editor can be used to cut, copy, paste and mix selected parts of audio waveforms.

An internal time code is maintained in the format of SMPTE 24, 25 and 30 frames per second to ensure synchronisation of audio files with video and animation.

The $350 card plugs into accelerated A2000s plus A3000s and A4000s. The US firm are looking for a British distributor but in the meantime can mail the package to UK customers.

They can be telephoned in California on 010 1 714 562 5926.

# PageStream set for features boost

THE US makers of Amiga desktop publishing software PageStream have announced details of an improved version of the package due for launch early next year.

PageStream 3 contains several new functions, including extra trapping and plate control functions which Soft-Logik say make the program a leader in the pre-press field.

A dual paragraph and character style system gives the options style override, style ripple and object styles and makes it easier to apply attributes to text and objects.

Its toolbox can be swapped between small, large, vertical and horizontal layouts, while floating panels for fonts, colours, styles, macros and pages aid editing.

Document formatting has been improved with auto-kerning and auto-hyphenation, text styles are configurable and tab allows left, centre or right alignment on any character.

The industry standard Pantone Colour System is used to ensure colours are printed accurately and there is support for spot and process colour, CMYK, HSV and RGB.

A Soft-Logik spokesperson said: "It's not just an upgrade but a completely new program. We have rewritten it from the ground up and have added hundred of new features.

"With PageStream 3, the Amiga now leads all computer platforms in desktop publishing innovation."

It is expected to cost £319, but Amiga owners who have bought PageStream 2.2 since March 15 can upgrade by sending their registration card, receipt and $5 for postage to Soft-Logik.

Other owners of PageStream 2 or higher can upgrade for $125. The St Louis-based developer can be telephoned on 010 1 314 894 8608 and dealer Meridian Distribution on 081-543 3500.

## Big bucks for big memory

SIXTEEN megabyte memory chips are now available to A1200 and A2000 owners using Great Valley Products accelerators – the bad news is they cost £1,299 each.

High speed, high density modules give GForce040/33 and A1230 Turbo+ owners the ability to increase their memory by a factor of four to 64Mb and 32Mb respectively.

Andy Leaning, spokesman for GVP's British distributor Silica Systems said the chips are aimed at users of memory hungry applications such as computer-aided design.

He said that whereas most Amiga memory has a speed of between 70 and 80ns, this RAM works at a higher rate of 60ns and blamed the high price tag on the technology advancement. A fitting service is available from the firm, who can be telephoned on 081-309 1111.

## Golden upgrades for Amigas

TWO upgrades for owners of top-end Amigas have just been added to London-based distributor Golden Image's (081-365 1102) range of products.

Multiface Card III expands the computers by adding two serial ports and a parallel port working at high transfer rates.

Through multi-tasking, the ports can be used simultaneously and are claimed to be suitable for mailbox, modems, plotters, lasers and networks.

Oktagon 2008 is a SCSI-II controller that can be expanded with up to 8Mb of memory and allow seven SCSI devices to be connected to the machine.

It features auto-reading of SCSI unit parameters, automatic disk change detection, login and password protection and comes with virtual memory Gigamem.

Both work with A2000s, A2500s, A3000s and A4000s and cost £129 each.

## Scanning systems improve at Power



*Power Scanner: New software and parallel port model*

PERIPHERAL manufacturer Power Computing (0234 843388) have improved their scanning software and are set to launch a colour hand scanner which plugs into the Amiga's parallel port.

Software Power Scanner 4 has a redesigned interface, the ability to add text to scans using any font and size, auto colour sections of grey scale scans and a full Undo feature.

There is manual or automatic resolution selection, an improved print control menu, ability to create 16, 64 or 256 greyscale images and full 24-bit scan handling.

The company's new colour hand scanner, meanwhile, plugs into the parallel port of any Amiga, making it available to owners of A600s and A1200s.

The £200+ device gives 4,096 colours on non-AGA computers and 262,144 on machines with the latest graphics. It comes with v4 of the firm's software.

## Video titles in 24-bit link

MONTAGE 24 is a 24-bit video titling and graphics package just introduced by Innovision Technology, the American makers of Broadcast Titler II and Video Effects 3D.

It uses IFF, HAM-8 and Toaster images for backgrounds and logos and can be used to generate colour spreads, bevelled boxes and tile patterns.

The program features translucency blending for text and graphics and its eight scalable fonts can be resized by click-and-dragging.

Characters are anti-aliased to whatever background they are put on and effects include variable transparency, gradient colour fills, embossing and outline and cast shadow features.

Kerning can be done automatically or manually and any combination of fonts, sizes and colours can be used on each line.

Montage 24 works with AGA Amigas and those using Opalvision, GVP's IV24 or a Video Toaster. An optional module allows PostScript and Compugraphic fonts to be imported.

Meridian Software (081-543 3500) and Micro-Pace (0753 551888) are among the companies selling the package in Britain. Price, around £330.

## Books offer Amiga advice

BRUCE Smith Books (0923 894355) have just published a new title and announced details of others due in the next few weeks for Amiga users who want to learn more about their computer.

*Mastering AmigaDOS 3 – Reference* is a guide to the A1200 and A4000 version of AmigaDOS, covering more than 140 commands in 416 pages. Each appears with a synopsis and templates and where appropriate there is a cross-reference with other commands.

Practical examples are given and there is material on Preferences, hardware support, AmigaGuide/MultiView, hard drive backup, IFF and Exchange Qualifiers.

*Amiga A1200 Next Steps* will assume basic knowledge of the computer and show how to progress onto greater things such as programming in MultiView and installing a hard disk.

Absolute beginners to machine code will be taught how to program the A1200 by Paul Overaa in *Amiga Assembler Insider Guide.* And enthusiasts interested in learning more about the Workbench will be helped by the firm's fourth book *Amiga A-Z Workbench 3.*

## Long life head for inkjet

SPEEDJET 200 is Seikosha's latest contribution to the budget end of the ink jet printer market, with its key feature being a long life printhead.

It can be refilled up to six times from separate cartridges in an operation which Seikosha claim is easy, environmentally sound and cheap.

This model has 300 x 300 laser quality resolution, a maximum format of 80 columns at ten characters per inch and a print speed of three pages per minute.

Paper handling is semi-automatic manual feed suitable for single sheets, envelopes and transparencies although there is an option for an automatic sheet feeder which can hold 70 sheets.

It comes with 128k of memory and is HP DeskJet+ compatible. Extra memory and emulation cartridges for Epson LQ850 and IBM Proprinter are available.

The recommended price is £276 but expect to find it much cheaper at most dealers.




*SpeedJet 200: Features a long life printhead*

## Font editor's features grow

DESKTOP publishers are targeted for an improved version of Soft-Logik's (010 1 314 894 8608) Amiga outline font editor, TypeSmith.

Version two of the program can load, save, edit and generate bitmap screen fonts and for the first time enables users to create them manually or automatically from an existing outline font.

Hints improve the look of fonts at low resolution and at small sizes. TypeSmith loads those created by other programs and will save them without making changes.

It can generate hints for new or modified fonts, and can convert PostScript hints to Intellifont format.

Registered owners of the software will receive upgrade details directly from Soft-Logik but for newcomers it will cost £169.95 from Meridian Distribution (081-543 3500).

# The Vidi Amiga Range

For more information refer to advert on outside back cover




Rombo, are proud to announce the launch of their new range of Multimedia Digitisers.

Each digitiser has been designed with total flexibility in mind, by offering a cost effective upgrade path between models. Giving the user complete peace of mind, and the freedom to choose a digitiser for his present requirements. But reassuring him, that if those change, he can move up to the next model. All Vidi Amiga's now have a similar user interface, so moving between products is easy !




**Vidi Amiga (12) RT**, offers all the functionallity and specification of Vidi (24) RT, but in 12-bit. Capturing 4096 colour images in real-time from any video source. This includes TV, Video Recorder, Video Camera, Satellite etc. etc.

New user interface with powerful image processing and picture manipulation. Support for both composite and SVHS or YC inputs.

Plug-in device with easy install software. Simple enough for the novice yet powerful enough for the professional. Compatible with all Amiga's. Never before has the Amiga market seen such value for money. Manufacturer upgrade available to Vidi Amiga (24) RT POA. Compatible with all AGA resolutions and colour modes.




**Vidi Amiga (24) RT**, will push your Amiga to its limit. Real-time image capture in excess of broadcast quality. True colour, photo -realistic picture files grabbed from any video source. Display resolutions up to 1472 x 576, what more can I say !

Vidi Amiga (24) RT offers a breakthrough for all Amiga users, taking them into the world of 24-bit image capture. With no restrictions on video equipment or Amiga hardware.

All the pictures shown on the full page Vidi Amiga (24) RT advert represent the actual printed output quality that can be achieved. Simply by sending the finished image file to a Bureau for output.

Throw away your scanner, its too much like hard work !

ROMBO

Rombo, Baird Rd, Kirkton Campus, Livingston, Scotland.
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# What's new USA

Denny Atkin reports on the impressive new features of Music-X 2.0, and rounds up the rest of the news from the States

Imagine 3.0 was nearing release as this column went to press. The new version of the 3D rendering program, which will be available for both Amigas and MS-DOS machines, has tons of new features.

The new real-time interface makes image composition much easier and more intuitive. A 3D font editor lets you create text within the program, and the new and improved deformation control makes warping text and objects a snap.

The program also sports improved anti-aliasing and full kinematic motion control, which lets you easily create complex, natural motions in your animations.

AGA support is there, of course, and over 100 new textures make for more realistic objects. There's a lot more here as well, and Imagine 3.0 promises to give Real 3D and Lightwave 3.0 a real run for the money. Look for in-depth coverage in an upcoming issue.

For more information on the upgrade, contact Impulse, 8416 Xerxes Ave. North, Brooklyn Park, MN 55444; Phone (612) 425-0557; Fax (612) 425-0701.



*An illustration created in Imagine 3.0 for the cover of Rodriguez-Soussan Productions' Imagine: The Possibilities, Unlocking 3.0 tutorial videotape*




*Bevelled PostScript fonts were imported into Imagine 3.0's Spline Editor to create this picture; the background illustrates the new Gas Giant texture*




*Imagine 3.0's new particle effect can be used for creating organic effects in animations*

## Music X-Press

Amiga Midi musicians will be happy to hear that Music-X is back on the market, now from HollyWare. The latest update, v2.0, sells for $199.95. It includes new modules such as DeFlam, Quantizer, RexxEdit for creating customised macros, and PrintEventList.

It now supports more than a dozen additional Midi commands and can play sounds using your Amiga's audio capabilities as well as Midi – the Amiga voices are great for percussion effects.

Music-X 2.0 supports Blue Ribbon's One-Stop Music Shop, as well as the Alesis ADAT and AI-2. Upgrades from Music-X 1.0 are $100.

If you liked the original Music-X but found it difficult to compose music using it, you'll love Notator-X.

This package is a score-writing program that works with Music-X 2.0 and any sequencer that supports the Midi file format. The program uses standard notation and supports notes, chords, rests, dynamics, angled beams, groups, ties, octave symbols, text frames, and more.

You can have up to 32 tracks on 18 staves, as well as five lines of verses with a maximum of three different endings in a score. The Lyrics Editor automatically aligns lyrics under the notes on the staff, including words split up over several notes.

The program costs $79.95. For more information, contact HollyWare Entertainment, 13464 Washington, Marina Del Rey, CA 90291, or call (310) 822-9200.

## Have a Lite

Fascinated by beautiful Vista Pro renderings but upset that the program requires 4Mb of memory? Virtual Reality Laboratories is about to release a version that will work well on a standard A1200 called VistaLite.

The new version does away with some of the fancier features of VistaPro 3.0 and adds virtual memory support. It doesn't support 24-bit pictures, but it does create 256-colour and Ham8 pictures. VistaLite renders pictures up to 640 x 512 in size, and still supports trees, clouds, haze, snow, lakes and rivers. Scripting's still there as well, so you can render frames for animations.

Even without all the bells and whistles of the full-blown program, it's still a heck of a lot of fun to play with. And there are a couple of features that VistaPro doesn't have, such as pre-defined palettes for different season, sunrises, and sunsets.

Price hadn't been set at press-time. Contact Virtual Reality Laboratories, 2341 Ganador Court, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 for more information, or call (805) 545-8515, or fax (805) 781-2259.

## Nothing's Final...

SoftWood is not your typical software company. Standard industry practice is to start advertising – or at least hyping – products many months before they're available. Not SoftWood, though. The company released the new Final Writer word processor before advertisements even hit the US magazines, and only scant days after ads appeared in the UK.

This new word processor resembles Final Copy II, but sports tons of new features. It's more comparable to the expensive professional PC word processors than competing Amiga products.

It borrows the popular button bar concept from Windows programs such as Ami Pro or Word for Windows 6.0. It has 180 different buttons which you can drag and drop onto up to eight strips (you could create one strip for graphics functions, one for text formatting, and so on).

You can not only map built-in Final Writer commands to the buttons, but also AmigaDOS commands, and ARexx commands and scripts. You can even map text strings to them, so you could create a button to automatically insert your name and address in a document.

Final Writer has full support for loading IFF graphics, like Final Copy II, but it also supports Encapsulated PostScript (EPS) outline graphics. Unlike most programs, Final Writer will print EPS graphics on non-PostScript printers. Graphics, as well as text, can be rotated on the page in one-degree increments.

You can even group graphics – Final Writer crosses the word processor line into desktop publishing territory in many respects.

That's not to say the program skimps on word processing capabilities. Along with all the standard editing capabilities you'd expect, as well as a high-quality spelling checker and thesaurus, Final Writer also sports sophisticated indexing capabilities.

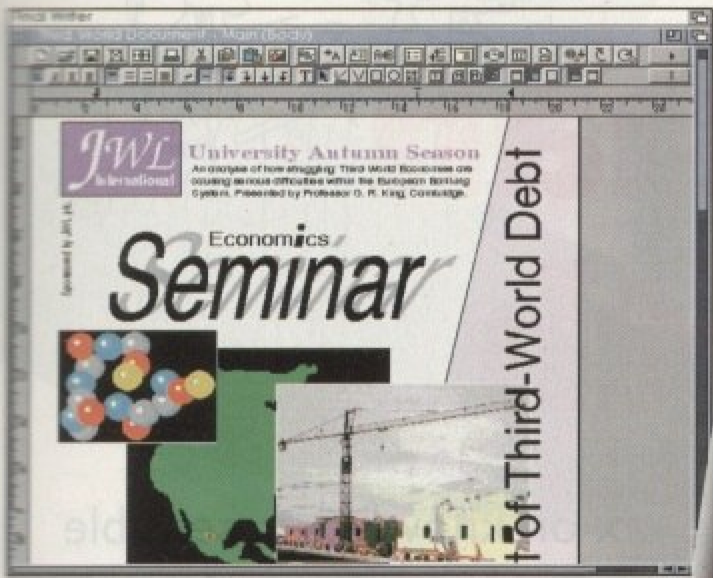
Other professional features include Table of Contents, Endnotes, Bibliography, and Outline generation. You can even create a Table of Illustrations for the graphics used in your document.

Smart hyphenation makes for professional-looking text, and sectioned documents with multiple master pages makes long-document publication easy on the Amiga for the first time.

If that wasn't enough, Final Writer also includes 120 high-quality PostScript outline fonts (it supports Compugraphic and NimbusQ fonts as well), 100 EPS clip-art images, and 25 ARexx macros.

US upgrade prices are $55 from Final Copy II Release 2, $65 from Final Copy II, $75 from Final Copy, and $100 from Pen Pal. Contact distributor Gordon Harwood Computers for UK upgrade prices. SoftWood can be reached at PO Box 50178, Phoenix, AZ 85076; phone (602) 431-9151; fax (602) 431-8361

# You can't use Software this Powerful, and produce Documents this Good...




*Unless, you buy an expensive PC or Macintosh™, a high priced Colour PostScript™ Laser Printer, and a complex, costly Desk Top Publishing Package...*

If you're looking for a quality Word Processor/Publisher that performs as well as this, you may well start by searching through PC and Apple™ Macintosh™ software catalogues.

Even then though, you probably won't find a program that will combine the very best in Word Processing *and*... easy to use integrated DTP type facilities.

You certainly can't find software for your Amiga that's capable of all this...




*Actual printed output*

# ...or Can You?

# The VATman cometh



**Whether you call it a tax on knowledge, sensible fiscal policy, or a desperate attempt to retrieve the £50 billion deficit from the man in the street, VAT on magazines is about to happen, and it won't be good news for publishers or their readers**

When Kenneth Clarke made it clear that this autumn's budget would include the imposition of VAT on magazine, book, and newspaper sales, the publishing business groaned as one. When he later hinted that he wasn't in favour of the eight per cent middle tax rate, the groan became a wail of despair.

It doesn't take a maths professor to work out that 17.5 per cent VAT will hike the cover price of a double disk magazine by 80p, bringing the £5 computer magazine a step closer.

Ordinary single disk magazines, which currently sell for about £3.25, will increase in price to around £3.82, making them almost as expensive as double disk issues are today, and the effects of such swingeing increases could be very damaging to the industry.

The Amiga enthusiast is a voracious reader, and surveys carried out by the major magazines have always confirmed that many of us buy two or three different titles a month.

However, this sort of broad reading habit will cost £1.60 more once VAT descends like a financial damp blanket, and if readers start to restrict themselves to fewer magazines, sales as a whole will feel the squeeze.

Now this could just be the whinging of a group of profitable companies who are unwilling to do their bit to dig us out of our "awful hole", to quote one Cabinet minister, but as the Amiga industry as a whole depends on publicity to get the message about new products to the public, falling magazine sales could damage everyone.

In a worst case scenario, one or more of the smaller magazines might even wind up, a danger which particularly threatens the games-only titles. Pressure from consoles and the PC is one thing, but when it is aided and abetted by the Chancellor, things could get sticky.

The last audited circulation figures for the big three magazines – *Amiga Computing*, *CU Amiga*, and *Amiga Format* – showed healthy increases in sales (our own went up by 13%), confirming that the Amiga has made a come back thanks to the competitive price of the A1200 and the continuingly high standards in software.

When the market is on such an upswing after a lengthy recession, the prospect of its publicity being restricted by government taxes is an even more alarming one.

Things aren't all black, of course, and we at least don't have a magazine market which depends entirely on low prices for its sales. The PC shopping magazines, some as big as telephone directories, depend on very low cover prices and huge sales to keep readership up and draw in the advertising revenues. If VAT takes the price of such a magazine closer to the point where it is no longer a cheap impulse buy or second purchase, it could lose ten per cent of its readership at a stroke, with a subsequent loss in advertising. Everyone will be taxed at the same rate, of course, but the effects will depend upon each magazine's market position.

What is giving everyone in the publishing business a headache at the moment, though, is the fact that no one really knows what will happen next April when the price of the printed word rockets.

You, the reader, will suffer directly by paying more for your magazine, but in the long run a few benefits could come your way. A VAT-induced price rise, if it results in restricted sales, might prompt the major magazines to offer even more generous promotions than before, and we all know what that means. Intense competition in the Amiga magazine market has led to the free distribution of superb commercial software worth, to date, hundreds of pounds, the cover mounting of useful books, such as seen on last month's *AC*, and a huge increase in the number of competitions, reader offers, and other inducements to part with £4.

Not many readers would complain if this marketing war was to step up a notch and bring even better freebies to the newsagent's shelves.

One definite opportunity next year will be your last chance to beat the tax by taking out a subscription just before the rise comes into force. At a stroke, any regular reader will be able to save 17.5 per cent, and probably a lot more, as we bung our usual subscription offers on top, so keep an eye open if you intend to buy *Amiga Computing* in 1994.

**Stevie Kennedy**


## The AC team

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR Paul Austin
ART EDITORS Tym Lecky, Terry Thiele
NEWS EDITOR John Butters
PRODUCTION EDITOR Phil Morse
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ADVERTISING MANAGER Simon Lees
AD SALES Jane Normington
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We regret Amiga Computing cannot offer technical help on a personal basis either by telephone or in writing. All reader enquiries should be submitted to the address in this panel for possible publication.

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## **power**optical

| | |
|---|---|
| **128MB Optical Internal** | **£779** |
| **128MB Optical External** | **£879** |
| **128MB Optical Disk** | **£39.95** |
| **SCSI Controller A2000** | **£129** |

## **video**backup



Use a VCR as a backup storage advice, 200 Amiga floppy disks fit on to a 4Hr tape which can be used for an alternative hard disk backup system. What's more you can watch T.V on your 1084s monitor.

**£60**

## **floptical**drive

The Floptical stores 20MB of data on a 3.5" disk (a SCSI interface is required).

| | |
|---|---|
| **Floptical A2000 Kit** | **£289** |
| **Floptical A500 External** | **£389** |

## **syquest**drive

3.5" Removable HD from Syquest. Each cartridge stores 105MB.

| | |
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| **3.5" Syquest 17ms** | **£739** |
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We can supply SCSI or IDE 3.5" drives in many sizes.

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| **80MB** | **£179** |
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| **200MB** | **£349** |

## **ide**internal

2.5" Miniature internal HD for the A600/A1200, (these drives come complete with a cable and installation software)

| | |
|---|---|
| **60MB Internal HD** | **£139** |
| **80MB Internal HD** | **£179** |
| **120MB Internal HD** | **£229** |

## **icd**products

| | |
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| **Trifecta 2000 LX Bare** | **£139** |
| **Trifecta 2000 LX 80MB HD** | **£239** |
| **Trifecta 2000 LX 160MB HD** | **£329** |
| **Trifecta 2000 LX 200MB HD** | **£399** |
| **Trifecta 500 LX Bare** | **£195** |
| **Trifecta 500 LX 80MB HD** | **£295** |
| **Trifecta 500 LX 160MB HD** | **£359** |
| **Trifecta 500 LX 200Mb HD** | **£459** |

## **a600**memory

1MB RAM with battery backed clock.

| | |
|---|---|
| **A600 Memory** | **£39.95** |

## **1.5MB**memory

Fully supports 1MB of chip RAM and compatible with Fatter Agnus. (Requires Kickstart 1.3 and above, not compatible with A500+. Your Amiga needs to be opened , this may effect your warranty)

| | |
|---|---|
| **1.5MB Memory** | **£85** |

## **1MB**thru'port

Fully supports 1MB of chip RAM and fully compatible with Fatter Agnus. (Requires Kickstart 1.3 and above, not compatible with A500+. Your Amiga needs to be opened, this may effect your warranty)

| | |
|---|---|
| **1MB Thru' port** | **£49** |

## **PC501+**card



High quality memory card comes with 1MB of RAM on-board to expand your Amiga A500+ to 2MB of Chip RAM. (Fits in the trap-door, does not affect your warranty)

**£36**

## **a500**memory

4 Chip 512K RAM expansion with or without battery backed clock. Free software included. (A500+ compatible)

| | |
|---|---|
| **A500 Card** with clock | **£29** |
| **A500 Card** without clock | **£24** |

## **a500**8mb board

Expand your Amiga from 2MB to 8MB of RAM. Plugs into side slot, full auto config. and full through port.

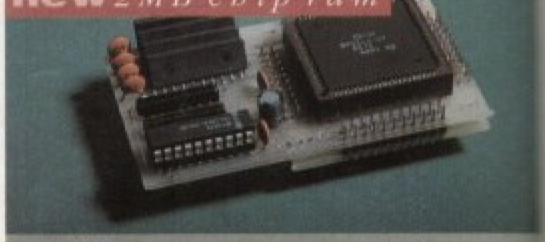
| | |
|---|---|
| **A500 2MB Board** | **£139** |
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| **A500 8MB Board** | **£299** |

## **a2000**8mb board

2MB to 8MB expansion for the A2000. Full auto config., IDE interface and 12 months warranty

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|---|---|
| **A2000 2MB Board** | **£139** |
| **A2000 4MB Board** | **£199** |
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## **new**2MB chip ram



Increase your Amiga's memory to 2MB of chip RAM, including 2MB 8375 Agnus, easy to fit (internal fitting), unlike every other 2MB chip RAM board currently available you A500 trap memory still works! fully compatible.

**£159**

## **special**offer

PC1208 68882-20MHz OMB RAM board.

| | |
|---|---|
| **PC1208 68882 20MHz** | **£99** |

## **power**drives

All Power Computing's disk drives come with a 12 month guarantee. The PC880B is available with Blitz Amiga, Blitz and X-Copy or Cyclone compatible (this drive is only available to registered owners of X-Copy Professional). The drive comes in a choice of two colours, black and cream.

| | |
|---|---|
| **PC880B** with Blitz Amiga | **£60** |
| **PC880B** with Blitz, X-Copy | **£75** |
| **PC880B** with black case (CDTV) | **£60** |
| **PC880E** Economy Cyclone Comp.. | **£49.95** |
| **PC881** Amiga 500 internal drive | **£40** |
| **PC882** Amiga 2000 internal drive | **£40** |
| **PC883** Dual disk drive | **£125** |

## **PC880B**drive



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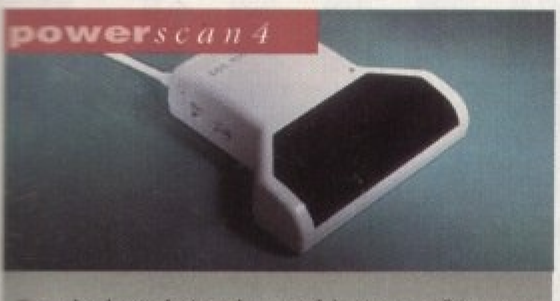

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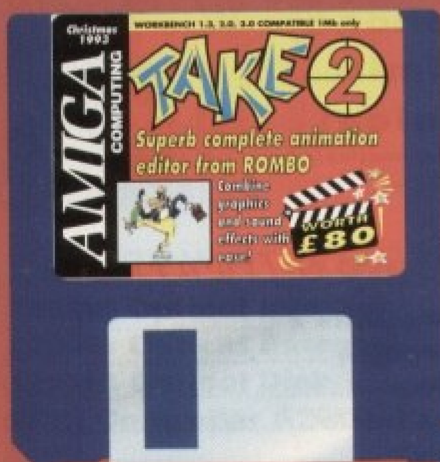
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*Create your own cartoons and digitised extravaganzas with Rombo's Take 2 animation editor*

# the DISK Sound




Take 2 is a combination of what is known as a "line tester" and an animation editor, and is designed to be used in conjunction with a paint package such as DPaint or the Vidi Amiga digitiser.

For all those millions of Amiga owners who have a copy of DPaint and the thousands who took advantage of our Vidi Amiga offer earlier this year, Take 2 is the icing on the animation cake.

The program will either control Vidi Amiga directly allowing users to grab video or hand drawn images straight into its frame bank, or accept a series of frames from an animation package such as DPaint, then give the user total control over the finished cartoon or movie.

Start by booting from the Take 2 CoverDisk (de-archiving won't work if you boot from another disk), then double click on the two icons it contains.

This will start a de-archiving process which will create two disks, one containing the Take 2 program, the other crammed with sound effects for use in animations.

Once Take 2 has de-archived, re-boot with the newly created disk and double click on the Take 2 program icon. When the program loads you will be looking at a blank screen made up of five main columns, one for the soundtrack and one each for the four levels of animation Take 2 will control.

This screen is the exposure sheet, or XSheet, and is the central control room for all Take 2 functions. With four levels of animation, the user has huge flexibility. For example, a DPaint animation involving a couple of cartoon characters running around against a backdrop, such as Tom and Jerry chasing each other around a kitchen, involves the user in drawing all elements – Tom, Jerry, and the kitchen – into each frame.

# Fusion Paint

**Fusion Paint is a simple paint package lacking some of the advanced features found in DPaint, but it has a couple of very useful advantages. First of all it is faster than DPaint for many operations, and secondly it can be used to edit or create icon images.**

As usual, Fusion Paint is archived on disk, so boot from the Fusion Paint CoverDisk and double click on the Make Fusion icon. The de-archiving process will format a blank disk and unpack the Fusion archive onto it, and once it's finished you should boot from the new disk.

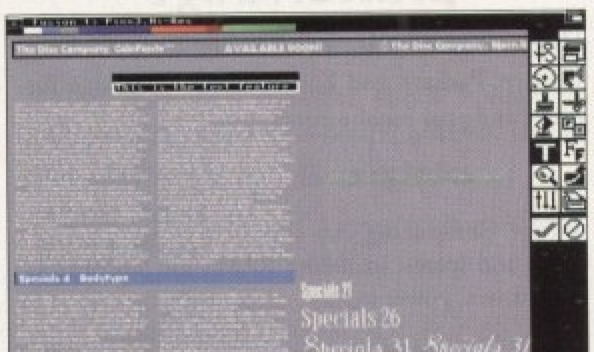
The first thing you'll see on starting Fusion Paint is a screen format requester which offers a variety of screen sizes and number of colours for your new drawing. Choose one from the buttons on display or type a screen size into the string gadgets below, then click on start.

A blank screen will appear with the usual tool box down the right hand side. Most of the tools shown should be familiar as they are similar to the tools found in any other paint package. One major difference, however, is that when some of the tools are clicked on, a number of optional tools appear in the area below the main tool box.

Experiment with Fusion's drawing tools for a while. We won't be covering these in detail as they should be self-explanatory.

Let's concentrate instead on exploring Fusion's icon features. Hold down the right mouse button and choose the Open... Icon option from the Project menu.

Click once on the screen to tell Fusion where to place the icon, then a file requester will appear. Now choose the Fusion Paint program file as your icon and load it up.




*The Fusion disk contains some great fonts*

The icon will appear as two images, one which appears when the icon is first displayed, and one which is displayed when the icon is clicked on. This second image is known as the alternate image and should always be the right half of an icon image.

It is possible to load or save single icon images, and these are known as back-fill complement icons. This means that when clicked on the image simply fills in with another colour or changes to the complement colour depending on whether there is an outline around the image or not.

For now we'll stick to alternate icons as they are more fun, and create a little man who waves his hand when the icon is clicked. We'll need to draw a cartoon picture, so the artistically challenged should either leave the room or make sure no-one can come in half way through the tutorial.

Right, draw a head and shoulders picture of a person with upraised arm and a big cheesy grin. Fusion's freehand drawing tool should be all that's needed for this, though the circle tool could come in handy for the eyes and the zoom lens will be handy for small details.

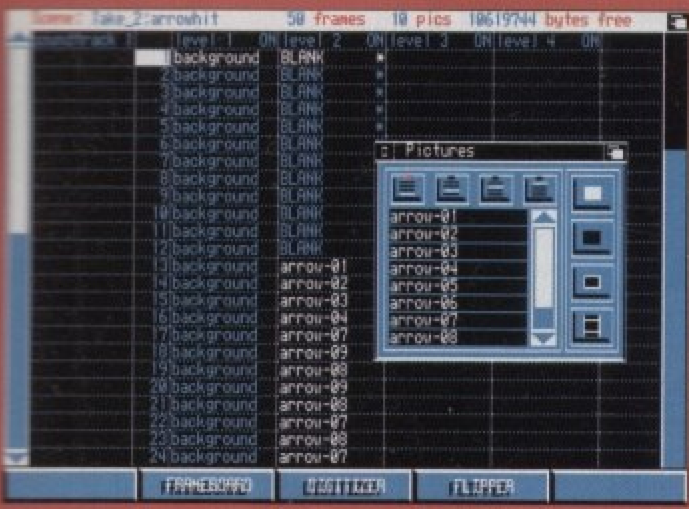
Once this image is finished, click on the cut brush tool (it has a pair of scissors on it) and cut around the little man. A cut window will appear in the top left-hand corner showing our brush, and if it meets with your approval, click on the Paste tool (it has a big brush on it).

## OUTLINES

Now paste the brush one pixel to the right of the original, taking care to make sure that the outlines of the two images touch but don't overlap.

We now have two identical images and if we saved the icon immediately it would appear that nothing happened when the icon was clicked on, so we have to make changes to the alternate (right-hand) image.

Try changing the position of the arm or the facial expression until something approaching a reaction can be seen from one image to the next. So long as there's enough difference between the two images we'll know we've clicked on the icon, so feel free to indulge yourself. The zoom lens (magnifying glass tool) is particularly useful for this sort of detail work. When the alternate image has been edited to




Load pictures for the frames in theanimation...




...then place the samples at the right point in the action




# and vision

Using Take 2, the user can create the two animated characters and load them as levels one and two, then the kitchen backdrop and load it as level three. When Take 2 plays the animation back to the user, the three levels are superimposed on each other and a frame made up from all four levels.

Levels can thus be edited separately from each other without the hassle of having to re-draw an entire frame, such as would be the case in any other animation package. Remember – Take 2 is not an animation creation program, but an animation controller and editor.

To demonstrate the program in action, the Take 2 disk contains a simple two-level animation called "arrowhit" which we will now load. Hold down the right mouse button to reveal the menu bar, and choose the XSheet menu. There is a load option with three sub-items to enable the loading of tracks, an ➤

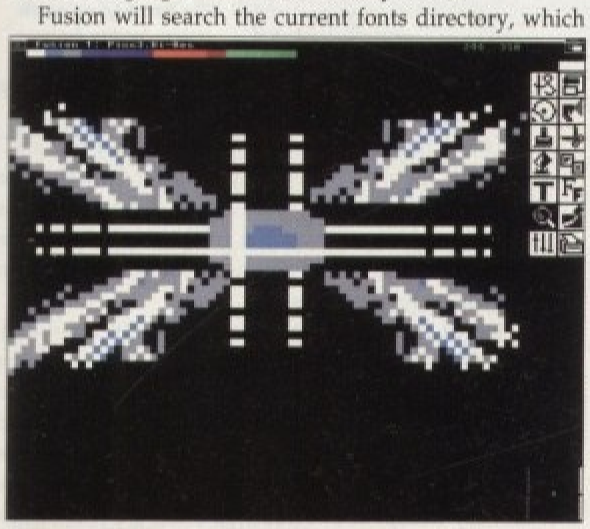
your taste choose the Save As... Alt icon option from the Project menu. To save the icon we must tell Fusion where it is, so we must now draw a box around our waving man.

Make sure that the box is tight around both images with no space to spare, then click the left mouse button, at which point a file requester will appear.

There's no need to save your icon with the usual .info extension, as Fusion saves the image as an IFF brush and that brush as an icon for itself. If you save to the RAM disk, go back to Workbench for a quick look at your finished icon.

Another of Fusion's more advanced features is its use of text and fonts, and there are several superb fonts on the Fusion Paint CoverDisk. First, let's select a font by clicking on the Font gadget, which is denoted by two Fs.

Fusion will search the current fonts directory, which



*Using Fusion's zoom feature on an icon*

should be its own if you have booted from the Fusion disk, then present you with a list of those it has found. For now, choose the Camelot font and click on the disk icon in the lower right-hand corner of the tool box to load the font from disk.

Now that we have a font, click on the text tool (it has a large T on it) and you should see a string gadget appear on screen. Type whatever text you require in here and press Return.

The text should appear on-screen and you can position it anywhere by clicking at the desired position or dragging it around with the left mouse button.

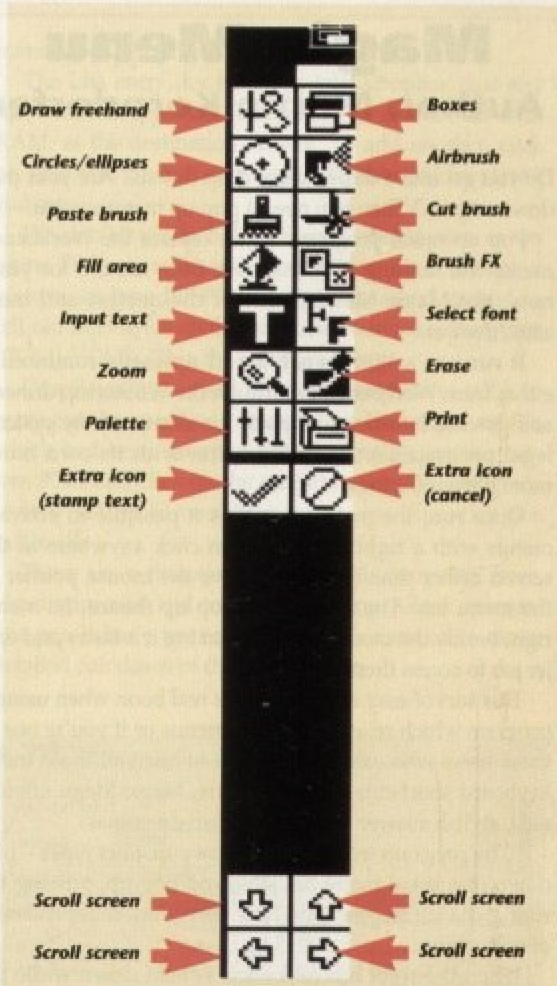
Once satisfied with the positioning, click on the checkmark box in the lower right of the screen to fix the text in place, at which point you should notice the next line of text is waiting below the first, neatly justified.

Fusion's third special talent is its ability to grab screens from any other package currently running. To do this, simply select the grab screen option from the main menu bar and confirm that you would like to proceed. Fusion will then wait ten seconds and grab whichever screen is presently being displayed.

All the user need do is set the grabbing process going, then flip to the screen to be grabbed using left Amiga-N or M and wait for two yellow flashes.

The first warns you that grabbing is about to take place, the second that it has finished, and when you flip back to Fusion, the screen should be loaded up ready for editing.

That's about all we have space for in these pages, but the remainder of Fusion's features need little introduction. The program works in much the same way as DPaint and other paint packages, and if you have any real difficulties, there's a generous manual offer on a page not a million miles from here...






XSheet, or a complete scene, so select the scene option.

When the file requester appears, go into the Take 2 disk directory and click once on the arrowhit directory to highlight it, then click on Load. Take 2 will scan the directory for scene information and any images the scene contains, then load the whole lot into memory.

The file requester stays on-screen in case the user wishes to load more than one set of files, so click on Cancel once disk access is complete and take a look at our new XSheet. Levels one and two now show the images used in each frame of the animation, and the soundtrack column is blank.

This tells us that there is a backdrop image called "background" and a second level containing no images until frame 13, then a series of files from an animation. We need to take a look at what we've loaded, so click on the Flipper button at the bottom of your screen.

What you should see is a simple black and white animation of an arrow hitting a tree, and the action will loop until you hit the right mouse button. Do this now and examine the Flipper control panel which appears over the animation.

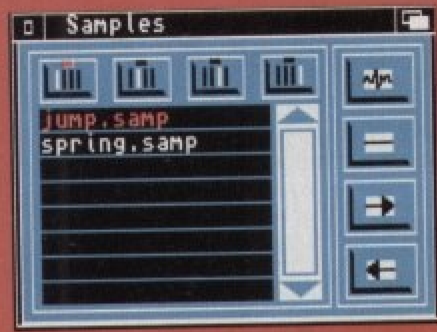
## CARTOON

All controls function in the same way as their VCR equivalents, so users should be able to zip back and forward through the cartoon with little difficulty.

Above the VCR controls there are a number of information fields showing which frame of the animation we are currently on and which images are being shown in the different levels. We can use this information to decide exactly when the arrow hits the tree, at which point we'll add a sound effect.

Click on the single forward arrow to advance the animation one frame at a time until we get to frame 16. This is the point at which the arrow first hits the tree, so now we know where to start playing the sound effect.

Now click on Quit Flip to go back to the XSheet, hold down the right mouse button, and select Sample Panel from the Panels menu. A blank panel will appear which shows no files until we load one, so make sure that the window is active by clicking on the Samples title bar, then hold down that right button again.




*You can load two samples at once*

A single menu appears enabling you to load, save, or delete samples, so select load 8SVX (the Amiga's standard IFF sound sample format) and make sure the sounds disk we de-archived is in a spare floppy drive. If you have only one drive, swap disks before selecting load.

Choose the Sounds disk from the file requester, then the Effects drawer. A number of special effects samples should be on show, but we only need two – one for the arrow being fired, the other as it hits the tree.

Click once on the jump and spring samples to highlight them, then on load to add them to the samples list, and finally on Cancel to get rid of the requester.

Adding the effects to the animation is simply a matter of clicking on the sample from the list shown in our sample panel (there should only be two), then on the leftward pointing arrow on the right-hand side of the window.

The mouse pointer should now turn to a "To" and we can add the sample by clicking in the soundtrack column next to the frame at which the effect starts to play.

Follow this process to add the spring sample to the soundtrack at frame 16, then go back to flipper and watch the animation again. Sounds better, doesn't it? Now what do we do with the jump sample?

You'll notice by looking at the soundtrack that each sample lasts for several frames, and if we try to put the next sample at, say, frame ten, the spring sample will be moved down to accommodate it, moving it out of time with the visual event of the arrow hitting the tree.

## GADGETS

At the top of the sample panel window there are four gadgets which represent the four soundtracks you can have in any Take 2 animation. There's only enough room on the XSheet window to show one soundtrack column, but if we click on the second gadget along, notice that the title at the top of the soundtrack column changes to soundtrack2 and we have a blank column in which to insert the second sample.

Easy, eh? Now insert the jump sample anywhere before frame 13, which is where the arrow first appears, then go back to flipper for another look.

We now have a much more attractive animation, but the two samples might

# Magic Menu

## Author: Martin Korndorfer

Do you get into a dither about drop downs? Are your pull downs a pain? Then you need a pop up menu system.

Pop up menu programs which replace the Workbench menus are nothing new and have been around for years now, but Magic Menu is one of the neatest and most attractive yet.

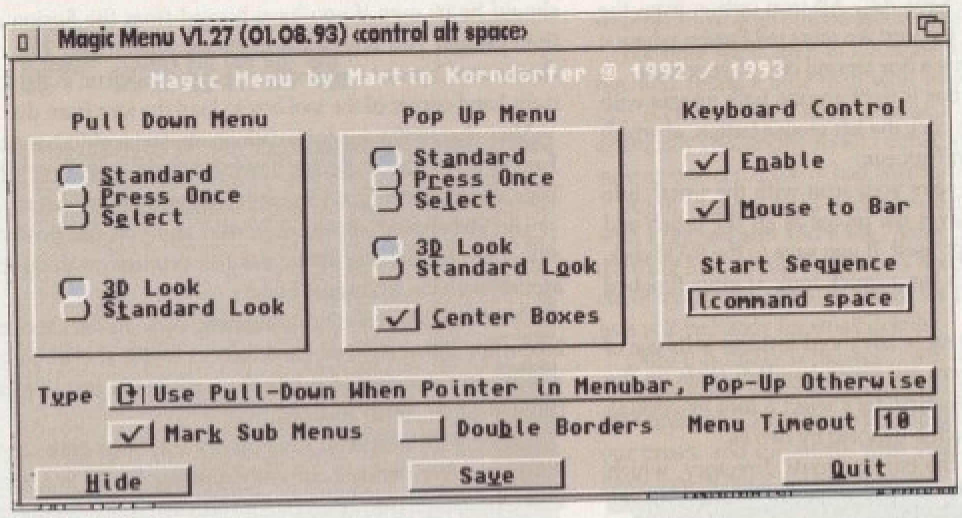
It runs as a Workbench 2 and upwards commodity either from Workbench or through the WBStartup drawer, and patches Intuition to replace the menus of any system-legal program launched thereafter with its own much more glitzy offerings.

Once run, the program makes it possible to activate menus with a right mouse button click anywhere in the screen rather than having to move the mouse pointer to the menu bar. The menus will pop up (hence the name) right beside the mouse pointer, making it a faster and easier job to access them.

This sort of easy access can be a real boon when using a program which relies heavily on menus or if you're one of those users who can't be bothered to learn all those tricky keyboard short-cuts. For such users, Magic Menu offers a neat, stylish answer to all drop down dilemmas.

The program treats menus as two distinct types – pull down (the usual menu bar jobs) and pop up, offering the user a chance to configure how they work independently of each other.

When the right mouse button is held down while the pointer is in the menu bar, drop downs of the traditional sort are the result, but when held down anywhere else in the screen, pop ups appear. In this way, users can have their cake and eat it – pop ups for when they're feeling bodacious, drop downs for those "back to momma" days.




*The best pop-up menu system for the Amiga*

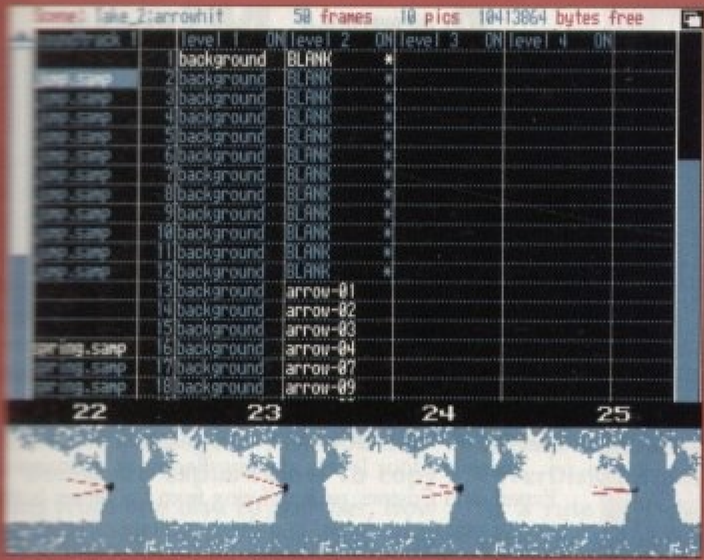
There are three ways in which either type of menu can work – Standard, Press Once, and Select. Standard is the usual way of holding the right mouse button down all the time the menu is visible, then releasing it when the desired option is highlighted, but the other two *modi operandi* are just a teensy bit radical.

Press Once is a method whereby the right mouse button activates the menu, which will then stay on-screen after the button is released.

As the pointer is moved, options are highlighted as if the button was still depressed, and the user just taps the right squeaker once more to make his or her selection. This is a good method for those with lazy fingers and long menus through which to browse.

Select is a little weird and works somewhat like a PC menu in that the right mouse button calls the menu to the screen, then the left button is used to click on the options and sub-items. Not very trad, but good soul food for those who use PCs at the office and need some serious menu bashing after a hard day's work.

To top of the bill of fare (pun definitely intended), Magic Menu gives one the option to control menus through the keyboard. Yes! Now you rodent haters can discard the little beasties for ever and just tap left-Alt and left-Amiga at the same time to open the menus, then use the cursor keys to navigate around them. A jab at the Return key sets your choice in motion, and you can sit back with a sigh and a well-deserved cigarette.




*Users can use the Frame board to flip through animations*

overlap by too much, or not enough, or you might decide that timing could be better.

Quit out of flipper and practice moving the samples around by clicking with the left button on the sample's highlighted first frame, then holding the mouse button down and dragging the sample up and down the soundtrack. A bit of experimenting should see our samples safely in the correct place.

Of course, you might try a couple of samples in a search for the best effect, and in this case, removing unwanted samples is easy. Just click on the sample's first highlighted frame on the soundtrack, then on the rightward pointing arrow on the sample panel.

To check a sample before inserting it in the soundtrack, highlight it by clicking on its name in the sample list, then click on the gadget at the top right corner of the sample panel.

We'll now take a quick look at creating a scene from scratch. If you like, you can save the current scene complete with sound sample information using the Save... Scene option from the XSheet menu.

Now choose New... Scene to clear the decks, then go to the panels menu and activate the pictures panel. Once the pictures panel appears, hold down the right mouse button and select load...ILBM.

When the file requester appears, choose the pics directory from the Take 2 disk and click with the left mouse button on mr1, dragging it down to highlight all eight picture files.

Click on Load, then the Cancel button and we should be back at the pictures panel. To insert the images, click on the film strip gadget in the bottom right of the window to select all files, then on the black box with a white outline, which tells Take 2 to paste the pictures to the currently active level.

We can now see the animation by using flipper again, and add an effect or two. If you have a footstep sample, perhaps on hard drive or among your sample library, this might be a good time to use it.

Adding a second level is easy. Load DPaint and draw a simple road graphic which rolls into the background over an eight frame loop, stick a bush or lamp post in to give the illusion of movement, then save the eight frames in a directory on disk.

Make sure that the background is the same resolution as our example piccies (lo-res 320 x 256) as Take 2 won't mix pictures of different resolutions.

## COLOURS

This applies to colours as well, so you'll have to ensure that the road is a simple black-and-white test image. Take 2 is a line tester, as we've already mentioned, and is designed to help you try different animation ideas, then test them at the line drawing stage.

Levels show through each other as greyscale images, successive levels laying down on top of each other. so the furthest away level, or backdrop, should normally be in level one.

In next month's *Amiga Computing* we'll be looking at some of the more advanced uses of Take 2, so don't miss it. And why not check out our manual offer and buy a complete Take 2 manual and tutorial for next to nothing?

## CoverDisk Hotline

*Amiga Computing* operate a CoverDisk hotline on 0625 859766 to help anyone experiencing problems. It is ONLY available on Thursdays between 2-5pm so please do not try to call us at any other time as you won't get an answer.

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TW14 0SN

## DSound 130

### Author: Dave Schreiber

DSound is a simple utility which enables the playing of long samples direct from disk, hard or floppy, thus saving oodles of precious chip memory. It works from CLI only, and if you want to give it a go, type:

```
CD SYS:DSOUND130
DSOUND CHEATER
```

If you didn't boot from the CoverDisk, go immediately to jail, do not pass Go or collect £200, and make sure to replace SYS with the drive number in which the CoverDisk has been placed.

As the on-disk documentation points out, there are a number of parameters attached to this command. There are flags to play the sample through left or right speakers, set the volume, force the sample to loop, and lots of other handy stuff like that. Stop being lazy and gently peruse the documents if you don't believe me.

As a quick try-before-you-bother-to-read, how about:

```
DSOUND -0 -V15 -W CHEATER
```

This will loop the sample over and over again with the dulcet volume of only 15 from a possible 64 and won't display the DSound window, which is one good way to drive a friend or relative barking mad as they try to figure out how to stop the noise without rebooting. Ctrl-C will do the trick, just in case you're interested.

## DropBox

### Author: Steve Anichini

Yet another commodity program for Workbench 2 and above, DropBox is designed to take the drudge out of those boring household chores you have to do time and time again. You know – washing the dishes, de-archiving things, and the like.

By simply telling DropBox that any time a file is passed to it which has the suffix .lha (to take only one example), the faithful little chap can be programmed to carry out an automatic command, such as de-archiving the file and placing the contents in RAM, thus saving you a lot of that opening Shell and typing in the command sort of malarkey.

When run, DropBox leaves an icon on Workbench onto which any icon or file can be dropped (DropBox, geddit?). The hapless file will be ruthlessly rushed to the program, thoroughly interrogated, and dealt with contemptuously. Sort of a Workbench friendly neighbourhood Bobby, when you think about it.

For a demonstration, run the program then double click on the DropBox left out on your Workbench screen. This will bring up an interface with a list of presets on the right and a number of options on the left.

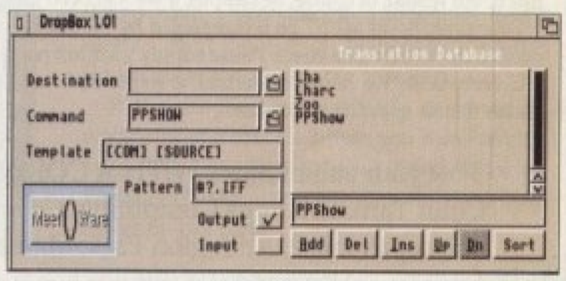
To begin with, the program looks in ENV: for its presets, but for the purposes of the CoverDisk we've had to put them in the DropBox drawer, so hold down the right mouse button and select open from the project menu. Load DropBox's prefs file and check it out.

The Lha entry, for example, tells DropBox that any file with the appender .lha should be dearchived with RAM: as the destination drawer. To add another, click on the Add button and type PPShow in the string gadget.

We don't have to bother about a destination as we know PPShow will send its results to the screen as a picture, so type PPSHOW in the command gadget to tell old thickie which C: command to invoke, then type [COM] [SOURCE] in the template string.

DropBox always need this basic template to tell it to carry out the specified command on the source, or file which had been dropped onto it. Finally, use the pattern #?.iff and click on the output button. The program is now set up to use PPShow on any file with the suffix .iff.

There are a thousand uses for this program, from viewing piccies and text, to launching ARexx macros, but you'll have to read the on-disk docs for a more detailed run down of the possibilities.






# Mousometer

## Authors: W Breyha and M Matzl

A neat little Workbench hack, this program is designed to provide what must be one of the most pointless computer statistics of all time – the distance your mouse has travelled in kilometres.

Just run the program and watch the window in the top right-hand corner of the screen as your mouse is moved, drool as those metres mount up, then swagger off down the pub to lean nonchalantly on the bar boasting about how you ran that rodent ragged.

There's a high score table to keep track of those marathon mouse marches, and the About function which you can access from a menu tells you how many miles you have travelled, what this is as a fraction of the earth's circumference, and your average speed in metres per hour. All totally hatstand, as I'm sure you'll agree.

# Army Miner

## Author: Alain Lafferiere

Minesweeper is a game which has had many followers and many clones, but they all follow the same format. A grid of squares is littered with mines and you have to proceed to uncover all the safe squares by the use of your tired noggin.

If an uncovered square has mines in any of the adjacent squares, it will show a number to tell you how many there are, and by working out the most probable free squares, you gingerly tap with the left mouse button until you clear the board or, as is more often the case, step on the wrong square and meet your bum on the way back down.

There are four levels of play: Beginner, Advanced, Expert, and Custom, each differing from the others in the size of grid to be cleared and the percentage of bombs on the grid.

An Undo button is available if you think you deserve another chance, and the game can be paused if you're playing against the clock and want to cheat, but otherwise this is just a very nicely presented version of an old favourite which, if you're an old fan of Danger UXB, you'll enjoy immensely.

# Error

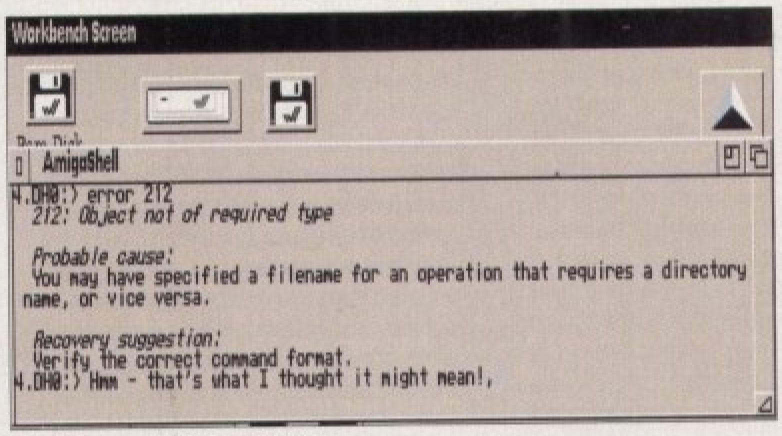
## Author: Njal Fisketjon

How many times have you wondered why the Amiga is so coy about its errors? I mean, error 212 can mean anything, can't it? This program is designed to help with most common AmigaDOS errors by supplying a much more comprehensive idea of what went wrong.

If, for example, you get "Error 205 – File not found", you simply open CLI and type:

```
Error 205
```

Error will then tell you that you've either got a device and a file mixed up or that you've typed a file name wrong, and suggest you check which directory you are in a try again. The program isn't an AmigaDOS reference manual, but it could help cut down the confusion at those critical moments when you're tempted to shove the Amiga's keyboard up the dog's backside.




*Take the worry out of error messages*

# Move

## Author: Kai Iske

Workbench has always had a few missing bits here and there, but the one command Commodore have always left out for no apparent reason is a move command.

The author of this program got a little steamed up about it, and faced with the choice of either punching out every Commodore employee he could lay his hands on, or writing a move command of his own, he wisely chose the latter course. Move is a simple CLI command which does a simple job, but it does something that AmigaDOS normally makes a complete pain in the dangly bits. Use it with the simple parameter information found on the disk and you should have few problems.

For example, moving the move command from disk to your C: directory is a simple matter of typing:

```
MOVE MOVE TO C:
```

and there's no faffing around with copy, delete, or rename. Neat, eh?

# Think you can do better?

Want to be famous? We are always on the look-out for quality Amiga programs for the CoverDisk. If you think you have written something good enough for others to share and enjoy, please send it in and we'll have a look.

The *Amiga Computing* CoverDisk is used by thousands of Amiga owners every month in places all over the world from New Zealand to the USA, so if your submission finds its way onto the disk, you could be famous.

Please make sure that you list ALL library and other files necessary for the program to work. Feel free to design your own icons for programs that run from Workbench, but please don't make them too big.

If you ensure your program is as compatible as possible with a wide variety of Amigas, it will also stand a better chance of publication. We are especially interested in small programs whether they be games, utilities or whatever.

We are prepared to pay our current rates for original work which has not been distributed in any other way and which has not been put in the public domain.

If you wish your program to be released as shareware or freeware we will be happy to publish it, but would, of course, be happier if we had been given it first!

Your submission MUST be accompanied by the submissions form, a copy of it, or a signed declaration to the same effect. Please supply your full name, address and phone number.

Unfortunately we cannot undertake to return disks sent to us as the volume of submissions makes this an impractical exercise.

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Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

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**The *Amiga Computing* CoverDisk is designed to be as simple to use as possible. Follow these instructions and you'll be up and running in no time!**

# GETTING STARTED




**New readers may have difficulties using our CoverDisk, so we have included this page to help you out.**

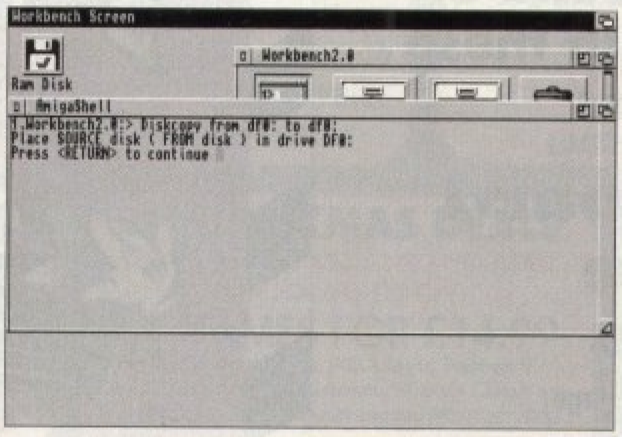
**Below we explain how to copy files from one disk to another, how to copy the entire CoverDisk and how to de-archive programs. None of the first things you must do when get your CoverDisk is make a backup copy, then put the original CoverDisk away for safe keeping. As a rule you should also do this with the majority of your software collection.**

## How to make a backup

To copy the entire CoverDisk, load up your Workbench disk, then either click once on the CoverDisk icon and select Duplicate, or select Copy from the Workbench menu, or open CLI/Shell and type:

```
DISKCOPY FROM DFO: TO DFO:
```

When prompted, put your CoverDisk (the source disk) in df0: and be ready to replace it with your blank disk (the destination disk). Follow the Amiga's on-screen prompts until the disk copy is completed. Now put the original away in a safe place and use your backup.




## Copying individual files

You might at some point want to copy a single program from a CoverDisk to your compilation, Workbench disk or even your hard drive.

To do this you'll need the COPY command. As most CoverDisk programs are stashed away in their own directories, the quickest way to copy a program is to copy the whole directory at once. Use the command:

```
COPY {directory} TO {newdisk} ALL
```

where {directory} is the full pathname of the directory you wish to copy, and {newdisk} is the name of the disk and directory into which it will be copied.

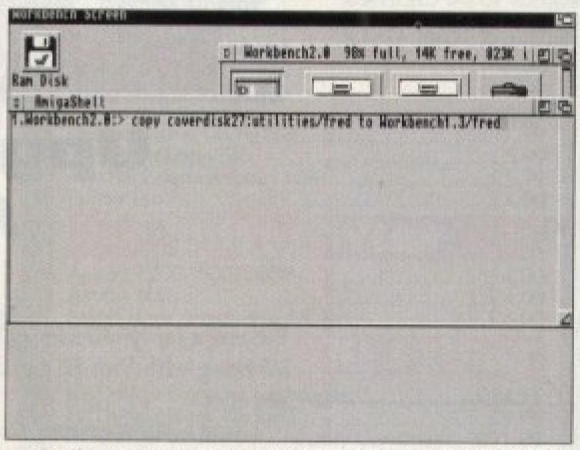
For example, if you wanted to copy a utility called FRED from CoverDisk 27's Utilities drawer to a directory called FRED on your Workbench disk, you'd type:

```
COPY COVERDISK27:UTILITIES/FRED TO WORKBENCH1.3/FRED ALL
```

Alternatively, you can click once on the FRED directory icon and drag it across to the new disk's window. This has the advantage of creating a new directory for you and copying the icon as well.

Once you have moved a particular program to where you require it you could experience some problems running the program. This is sometimes caused by the program not being able to find files which it needs to run.

A good example is the text files on the CoverDisk. These have been crunched using PowerPacker, so when you try to copy them to another disk and then try to read them you can't unless you have also copied the Powerpacker library into your LIBS drawer.




So if you have copied a program from the CoverDisk to your Work disk or hard drive make sure you also copy any other files the program requires, ie fonts, libraries, device drivers and Ccommands.

## De-archiving

Occasionally we have so many programs to fit onto the CoverDisk that we have to archive them. Archiving is where we take the entire contents of a disk and compress them into one file which is much smaller, giving us space to fit more programs onto the disk.

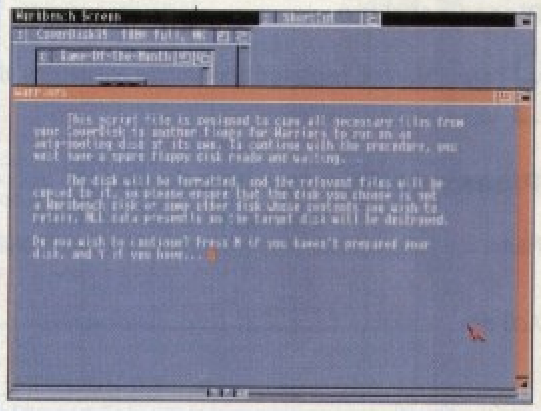
Dearchiving programs which are on the CoverDisk is a very simple task. If a program has been archived then you will need a blank disk to dearchive it onto.

Say we have archived a program called FRED. You simply double click on FRED's icon, and will be asked if you have a blank disk ready to dearchive to. Type "y" or "n" accordingly.

Your computer will then copy the archived file into its memory and ask you to insert your blank disk. It will proceed to format the disk, and will then de-crunch the archived file onto your blank disk.

Once this has been done you can simply reboot your machine with the disk which contains the dearchived program on it and then use the program as instructed in the CoverDisk pages.

Note that if you have a Workbench 2 or upward machine you must boot with the CoverDisk write-enabled to perform the dearchiving process.






## Workbench 3

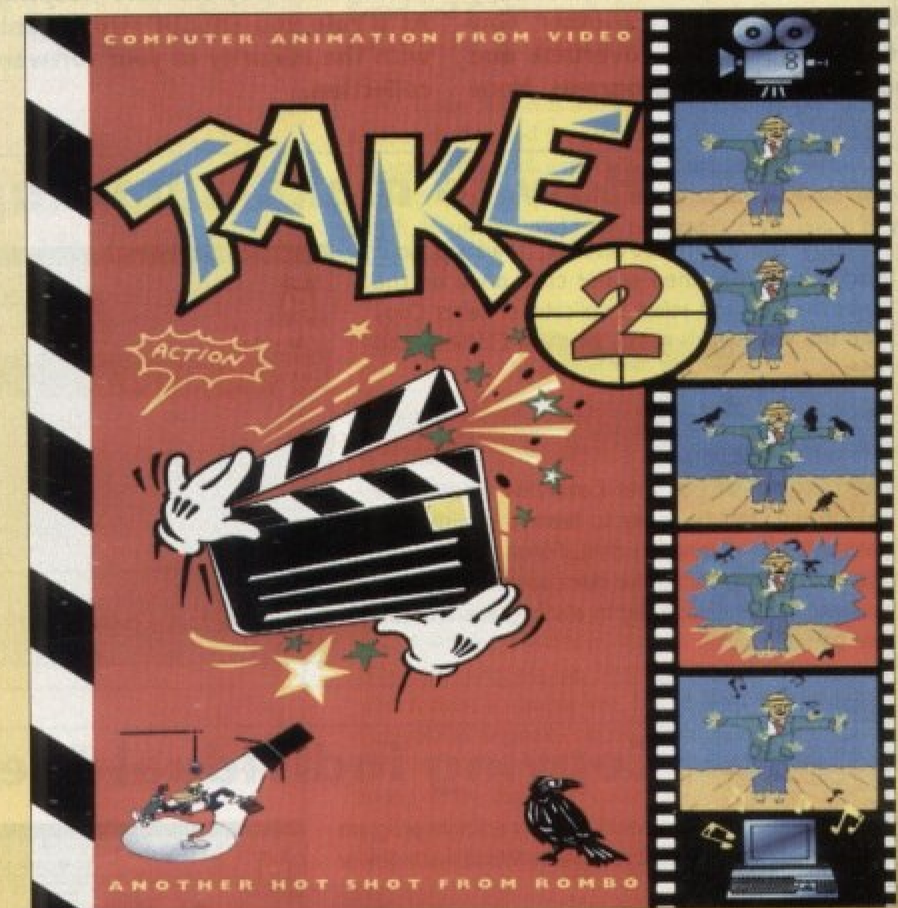
If you have a Workbench 3 machine, don't worry – most if not all of the programs on the CoverDisk will work on your machines.

If the program is specifically designed to work with Workbench 3 then you may have to copy the program to your hard drive or Workbench disk using the process described earlier on this page.



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## SCART TELEVISIONS & MONITORS

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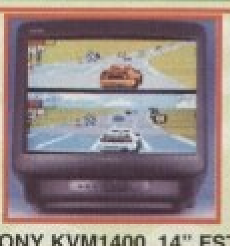
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WITH TELETEXT AND REMOTE CONTROL, MODEL 15PT161A. AUTO PROGRAMMING, FRONT AV SOCKETS, REAR SCART INPUT, 2 YEAR WARRANTY, TELESCOPIC AERIAL. *FREE SCART LEAD* (STATE AMIGA, ST, MEGADRIVE OR SNES)
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# Word

## Final Copy 2

**£69.95**

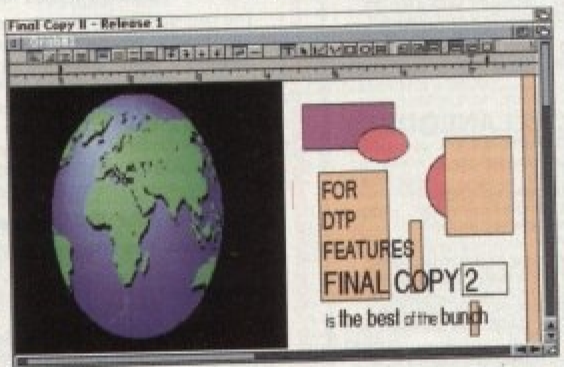
**Softwood Inc, Gordon Harwood, New Street, Alfreton DE5 7BP Tel 0773 83678**

Like all true American products, the 256 true colour Final Copy 2 attempts to make itself bigger and better than the rest. Hailed by its makers as the ultimate word processor and desktop publishing combo, Softwood Inc have certainly pulled a flashy, fast and solid if flawed piece of software out of the metaphorical bag.

When booted in, the user is faced with a plethora of the usual options plus the DTP drawing tools for generating ovals, boxes, graphs and frames. The latter features are not offered by any other package here other than its predecessor and stablemate Pen Pal.

Also included is the PC-aspiring viewing option which is vital for any DTP software. Click on it and the user is presented with a list of zoom in and out ratios which enable real precision in text and picture placement.

Final Copy 2 will read any IFF file which can then be manipulated, resized and cropped at a fast rate to suit the user's tastes (a rotation facility would have been useful).



*Final Copy 2 boasts a pseudo-desktop publishing side to its program*

Add the bonus of an excellent 256 true colour palette that can be displayed on-screen at any one time and Softwood Inc's latest AGA supported offering sounds unbeatable.

Alas, the old adage "all that glitters is not gold" is appropriate – FC2 is primarily a word processing package and while offering a healthy batch of WP features, there are a few omissions which leaves one wondering why they weren't included.

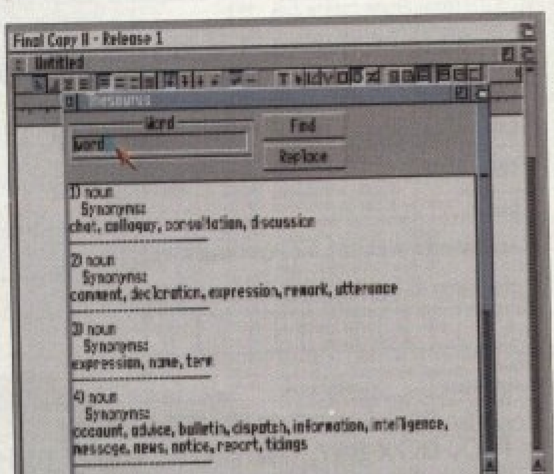
For starters, there is no show "invisibles" option which usually displays carriage returns, tabs and the like. Because of this, when text is converted into Ascii format, it'll be like walking up an 80 degree slope to clean up any formatting problems.

There is also no support for Adobe Type One and Agfa Compugraphic fonts. Back this up with no list or index generator as featured in Wordworth v2 and you've got a typical example of "great potential but must try harder".

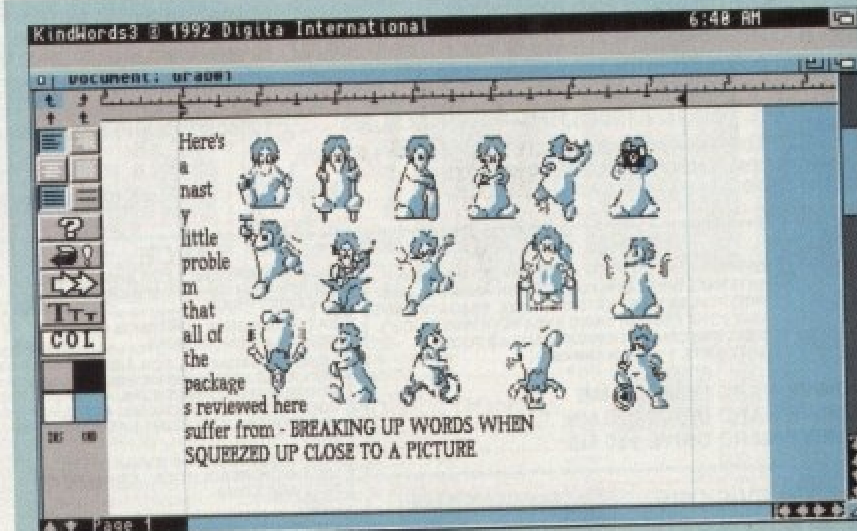
Having said all this, when push comes to shove, Final Copy 2 is a good looking package with some powerful features to boot and provides the user with enough facilities to create an attractive business or home document.

Ease of use 7
Value for money 8
Facilities 8
Speed 9
Overall 8





*A Thesaurus is essential to any comprehensive wordprocesser*



*With all picture loading packages reviewed here, the text wrapping tends to break up words without inserting a hyphen. In this example, KindWords 3 shows off this particular inability admirably...*

## KindWords 3

**£26.99**

**Activision, Sheraton House, Lower Road, Chorleywood WD3 5LH**

The second contender for the crown is KindWords 3 from the Disc Company. If you're familiar with Amiga word processors, you may well remember the hammering its parent KindWords 2 received due to its slow, bug-ridden performance.

When v3 popped up last year, it came as rather a surprise that the entire program had been rewritten by Digita International, the producers of Wordworth. As soon as it's booted in, you can see the striking similarity.

The wysiwyg (what you see is what you get) front end is practically identical but has fewer options than Wordworth. Icons run down the left-hand side of the screen and include the standard array of tab markers, text alignment, line spacing, undo, typeface, colour controls and palette.

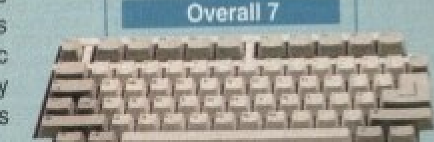
The pull down menus at the top yield a spelling checker, thesaurus and editing facilities. IFF pictures with a maximum of 16 colours can be placed anywhere on the page and manipulated into the desired position but this is not a DTP program so don't expect too much control when compared with the likes of Final Copy 2.

One of the program's strongest points is the ease of use. While the manual may seem thin compared to the encyclopaedic bulk of the other titles reviewed here, KindWords3 features a help option which details each function.

On the negative side, for users of other packages such as Protext and ProWrite, documents cannot be loaded or saved from other sources, only in KW3 or Wordworth format – Ascii or IFF text. This coupled with the lack of PostScript support, custom printer drivers, differing viewing ratios – it's a real pain doing any kind of layout work when you can't see the full result of your efforts up on screen, and others makes KindWords 3 a non-contender for serious office use. However, it's one of the best in its price range.

Cynically, the package sometimes feels like nothing more than a cheap and cheerful version of Wordworth brought out to fill a gap in the low budget market but considering that it is half the price of its big brother, it does fulfil its goal admirably. It offers basic features with an easy to use, friendly interface and is suitable for beginners and home users alike.

Ease of use 8
Value for money 9
Facilities 6
Speed 7
Overall 7



# d of honour

Adam Phillips acts as referee for the latest fight in the word processing wars. Find our which package is right for you

Word processors were invented to do one thing – to put an end to that cumbersome piece of equipment, the typewriter. To banish typing errors, to vanquish redoing an entire sheet because you change your mind about a sentence structure, to halt the tide of frustration at the lack of facilities and to shred once and for all the amount of manhandling the whole process takes.

In stepped computers to save the world from monotony and Tippex, to create a tool that would become more popular than its crippled little brother ever was.

Whether you're a teacher typing a report or Stephen King keying in his latest epic, word processors have become part of many peoples lives.

In the beginning Amiga word processing packages were ill in comparison to the monsters found on the PC but over the last year, we've seen a steady influx of software that is beginning to really show off the Amiga's word crunching capabilities.

Here is a pick of some of the best... let the fight commence.

## ProWrite 3.3

**£54.95**

**Silica Systems, 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup Tel: 081-309 1111.**

ProWrite 3.3 from New Horizon is the latest in the line of upgrades which have been going on since the dawn of Amiga word processing. This version has been specifically designed to include AGA as well as offering tweaks, enhancements both aesthetically and practically and all-round improvements from the last outing.

This package has always been a powerful word processor and as well as having all the features you'd expect, it has facilities that most of the titles reviewed here can't offer.

Take the retain/apply option – if you have a format or style of text that you want used elsewhere in your document, it is possible to retain the set up of a particular block of text or word and simply apply it to another thus saving time and hassle.

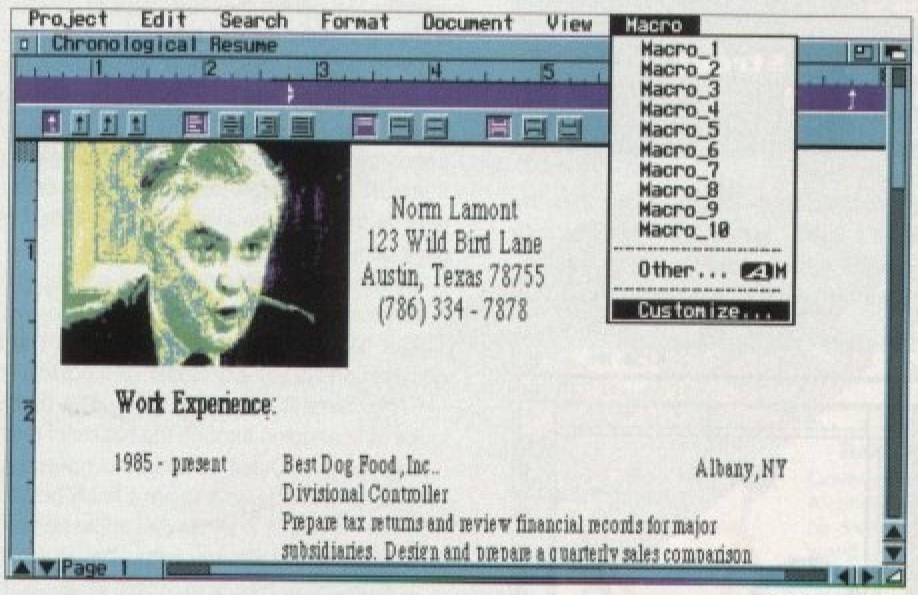
Another excellent if ill-planned feature is the bookmark facility. If huge essays or lengthy reports are the order of the day, ProWrite is able to lay a bookmark in the text which by the click of a button can be recalled up on screen wherever you are in the document.

The main problem with this is only being able to use one per document – a system of numbered or named bookmarks as used in Wordworth would improve and fulfil the potential that this option has.

The packages biggest let-down is picture placement. While saying that it supports AGA and 256 colours on-screen, the actual net result is a rather messy dithered interpretation of the image; 256 colours and Ham8 may well be recognised by the computer but if you actually want to see it in all its technicolour glory up on the screen then forget it.

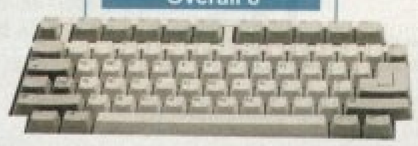
Another limitation is speed both in manipulating and especially loading times. When compared to Final Copy 2, ProWrite positively drags its heels when booting an image in.

These misgivings aside, it offers enough flexibility and versatility to be ideal for home use. With full PostScript support, the user being able to set different headers and footers for odd and even pages, the ability to customise the function keys through macro and a spelling checker that checks as you type, ProWrite v3.3 is well worth taking a look at – especially with the recent price slash.




*Make ProWrite faster and true AGA supported then this package could end up at the top of the pile*

| |
|---|
| Ease of use 7 |
| Value for money 9 |
| Facilities 8 |
| Speed 8 |
| Overall 8 |



## GLOSSARY

**Ascii** – Acronym for American Standard Code for Information Interchange. This translates into a code that can be transferred between different computers or between a computer and peripheral device.

**boot** – Another way to say start up.

**carriage return** – A non-printing Ascii character that causes printer or display to place the next character on the left margin; in other words to end a line of text and start a new one. Even though carriage returns are "invisible", they're deleted like normal characters.

**font** – A complete alphabet of characters for one design, size and style.

**HAM** – Acronym for Hold And Modify, used by the Amiga to display 4,096 colours at once, using only a fraction of the memory required by normal methods.

**mailmerge** – An application that takes names and addresses from a database and outs them into form letters.

**PostScript** – A page description language used to transfer information to printers and other devices

## Final Writer preview

**£129.95**

**Softwood Europe, 0773 836781**

From the same stable as Pen Pal and Final Copy 2, Final Writer is apparently, according to the manufacturers Softwood, the most comprehensive word processor with DTP capabilities to match ever produced on the Amiga.

You'll have to wait a while for our definitive review but judging from appearances and the bundle of information that flew our way, it certainly seems to be a package worth waiting for.

Like Final Copy 2, Final Writer has DTP facilities but also rotate text and graphics option to make documents look the real business. Couple this with a host of powerful features from cutting, copying and pasting graphics to structured EPS clip art images supplied with the package and Final Writer looks like it could well be a winner. Stay tuned for more details...

# Wordworth v2

## £129.99

**Digita International Ltd, Black Horse House, Exmouth EX8 1J Tel: 0395 270273.**

Wordworth v2 is a plush, solid and attractive word processor with an intelligent interface and a comprehensive well-designed manual.

This package is the most popular in the *Amiga Computing* offices due to its wide selection of facilities and clear layout. Digita International, the programmers, have always tried to incorporate easy on the eye displays and this is no different.

It features very basic DTP facilities such as the ability to place pictures and manipulate them, but has none of the drawing tools that its main rival Final Copy 2 boasts.

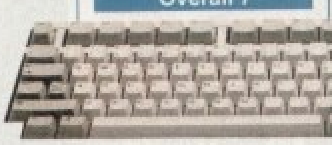
A page preview can be selected to see either facing pages, several or thumb nail size for multi page viewing. I wasn't convinced that the representations were particularly accurate and as with Pen Pal, graphics were certainly out of proportion on a full page preview.

Imported pictures range from not only AGA Ham8, 256 and colour IFFs but also include ProDraw clip art, Encapsulated PostScript and the PC Bitmap formats, PCX and BMP which none of the other packages can cater for.

Full colour AGA, HAM and IFF can be loaded through setting the screen preference in the Workbench which means those with hi-res monitors can word process in any resolution they want to.

The only drawback is that it still takes a long time to import large pictures and the program eats up memory like Final Copy 2 never did.

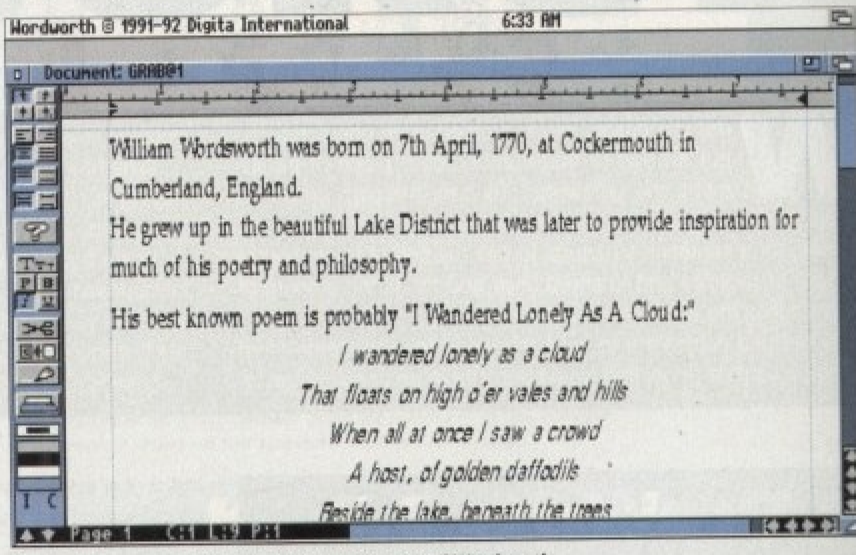
- Ease of use 9
- Value for money 7
- Facilities 7
- Speed 7
- Overall 7



On the word processing side, it has wysiwyg display and a large selection of features. The user is able to create indexes and lists. This is achieved through writing the text and highlighting the words that you wish to be stored in the list which are then transferred to be used later.

Among the literary options is the glossary. When chosen, the user is presented with a list of terms commonly used in letters, documents and the like. By clicking on one of them, it is placed on the page wherever the cursor is. This list can also be personalised and expanded to include your own fave catch phrase. Like ProWrite 3.3, Wordworth also features a bookmark facility but improves on it by giving the user the option to insert as many as they need in a single document by simply naming each one.

If full PostScript support, 17 superb Agfa fonts and drivers for 140 individual printers in a professional operating package sound appealing, then Wordworth v2 is well worth taking a look at. Highly recommended.




*Here's that poem in full plush wysiwyg courtesy of Wordworth*

# Pen Pal

## £36.95

**Gordon Harwood, New Street, Alfreton DE5 7BH Tel: 0773 836781**

Of all the packages reviewed here, Pen Pal, from the makers of Final Copy 2, is the most user friendly and accessible of them all. It's ideally suited to for the absolute beginner wanting to create a reasonable document or database without becoming flustered and frustrated due to technical instructions or unwieldy operation. The actual package is split up into two different sections – a basic word processor and a database creator for producing detailed information storage sheets.




*The excellent magnifying window on Pen Pal marred only by the disproportionate display...*

On loading, the user is presented with a well laid-out work top which includes DTP drawing tools. With these, as with FC2, you are able to construct boxes, horizontal and vertical lines but not ovals.

Other facilities include edit, file controls, mail merge, a large font selection and so on. As far as the typeface option operates, it works well but it is not possible to customise your own sizes. This is made worse by the maximum point size only being 48 when, for a good solid title, 65 is often needed.

Another excellent feature that hasn't been implemented as well as it could have been is the full-page view. When selected, the user is shown a view of the whole page plus a window for close up work.

By using the magnifying glass pointer, it's possible to select the part of a document you wish to see in more detail.

This all works fine apart from the fact that the full-page view is not what you'll see on paper and is actually stretched horizontally out of proportion.

This makes it very difficult to get a precise idea on exactly how the document looks without going through the hassle of printing it out and wasting paper.

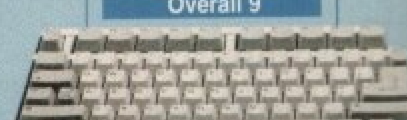
Pen Pal does have some useful options such as locking up graphics so that the user doesn't accidentally move a finely positioned picture or set of images.

Form making is another well implemented facility. By creating the basic structure for the invoice or whatever it may be, all the user has to do is simply fill in the details.

The database creator is simple to use and as with the word processing section, is Ascii-compatible. Through the generator, a database to suit your specific needs is created but for serious business use, this is not adequate.

With no special printer drivers or PostScript option, Pen Pal cannot really be seen as anything more than a good introduction title and a utility that can only really be used to any useful effect in the home.

- Ease of use 8
- Value for money 7
- Facilities 9
- Speed 8
- Overall 9



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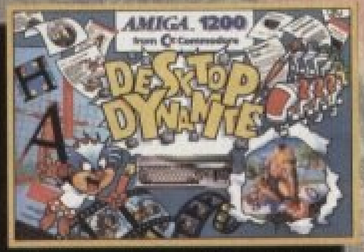
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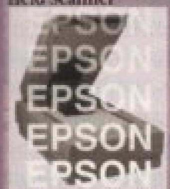


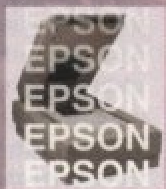
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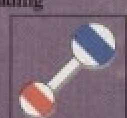
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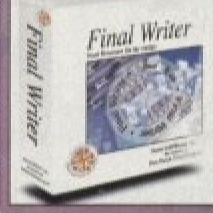
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There's been a lot of furore in the Amiga press of late, talking about how the PAL version of the NewTek Video Toaster is here, and we don't have to wait any longer for broadcast video on the desktop.

While the Prime Image standards converter card which makes this so-called PAL Toaster possible is certainly A Solution, it's not The Solution.

Anyone with a full grasp of the facts will ignore the desperate ravings of Amiga users who trust a spec sheet more than the evidence of their own eyes.

OK, yes, the Video Toaster is the best peripheral ever produced for the Amiga, bar none. Why? Well, primarily because it got the Amiga sold to more non-Amiga users than anything else besides Scala, and it's the first Amiga application to become something of an industry standard for DTV.

But the main reason the Toaster is a cool piece of equipment is that it allows a user, in an NTSC environment at least, to cut and paste video about like a word processor or DTP program. Oh yes, of course provided you have a little bit of extra outboard gear.

The Video Toaster isn't just as good as one of its parts, it's a whole environment. Barking on about Lightwave all the time or talking only about Digital Video Effects is missing the point.

What pundits always fail to point out is that the unique success of the Video Toaster is based on its many entry levels. Some people buy it simply for still 3D pictures, some for video captioning, some for 24-bit frame grabbing and painting.

None of these entry level uses for the Toaster require much outboard equipment, just a Toaster and a VCR or two.




*So near yet so NTSC, the Video Toaster remains a PAL dream*

When you climb up a rung you need better VCRs, and time base correctors to enable you to do live video mixing and other more tricky things.

Obviously some equipment can be hired initially, but the fact remains that you need it. But the cost of this outlay is offset by the initial cheapness of the Toaster itself, even cheaper of course if you already have the Amiga 2000 or 4000 to plug it into, which is more probable than not.

In a PAL environment however, this situation changes beyond recognition. Instead of having to lay out for a single board, you have to add £1,200 each for a couple of standards converters, which makes casual purchase and use impossible.

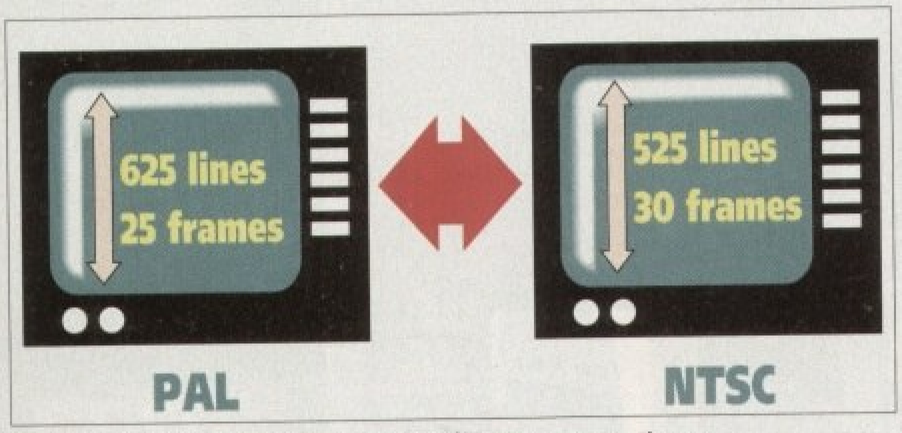
This effectively doubles or triples the price to the consumer and ensures that even if all they wanted to do was render things up to the quality of Babylon 5 or SeaQuest DSV, they would be paying through the snout and then some for the privilege.

This means that the only people with enough dosh to lash out for a Toaster system would be the professional sector, and then quality would be the main issue.

Whereas the quality of the Toaster in an NTSC environment is easily good enough for broadcast, you wouldn't stand a chance of doing anything for broadcast in PAL.

For a start, any TV or production company wouldn't accept a programme on anything less than Betacam SP, a professional video format which is very expensive and requires outboard TBCs and the like to ensure the quality is good.

Unless you have the outboard gear there's no point in going to SP. Your average UK independent production company would only just about afford this kind of technology, let alone your average technoweenie with a camcorder.




*PAL and NTSC are so different that to convert betwen them costs many times as much as the Video Toaster itself, and the results are often far from satisfactory*

## So you want a Video Toaster?

Well, here are the ways you can use a Video Toaster now and for real:

**1** You can run one if you have a job with an American company who are prepared to ship you a bunch of NTSC video machines, monitors and cameras. You use the Toaster in a fully-NTSC environment and then edit and save your creations to tape. Then you use an STD CON to transfer your work to PAL tape, or simply send your tapes in NTSC to the US for consumption.

**2** You can use one if you have a lot of money to waste and don't really care about quality (nobody cares more about quality than someone with lots of money, I might add).

**3** If you want to use a Video Toaster like you can in the USA, then the only thing you can do is move to the USA. That is the only way you'll get max quality out for minimum money in.

## FRAMED

The only place you'll really get away with a home-made tape on UK TV is *You've Been Framed*, and using a Toaster with an STD CON that's what you'll get – the quality of a home-made tape, not anything Desktop Broadcast Video.

The reason that the semi-pro video market in the UK isn't as well developed is that we don't have the wealth of cable stations they have in the US.

These are outfits who operate on Hi8, and where anything is permissible as long as the quality of the tapes you get is vaguely watchable. Not being rude to US TV, but NTSC is a lower quality video standard, having less lines and therefore less physical resolution than UK PAL. So content is king where quality lacks, as they say.

For the price, the Toaster is the best quality switcher you can buy, and gives you access to broadcast effects without all the expense of a full studio. That's the key, "without the expense".

Translate that into English, and you get the idea that although the Toaster is good enough for the NTSC (Never Twice the Same Colour) standard, it's less than acceptable (in professional terms) on a PAL system anyway, regardless of what the Prime Image STD CON board can do to it.

There's been a lot of hot air generated about the Prime Image STD CON card. It isn't a transcoder, for a start, it's a standards converter. Although Prime Image claim that it's a rock solid solution, and that it's brand new, soon-to-be-patented technology, it isn't going to be that good.

Why? Well, to be brutal if it was that good all the TV and broadcast mags would be alive with talk of it. What standards converters do is difficult and processor intensive, and the technology to do it well is very expensive.

Even with very good standards converters you are going to lose quality – this is an inescapable fact. The images may look just about the same, but in motion they judder, they jerk, they flop about like dead fish.

When you pan, the smooth pan is turned into a juddering mess. In short, the standards converter route is an absolute crock of poo. Why?

Imagine you have a frame of video. It's

# PAL

a frame of PAL video so it is 625 lines in height. You want to put it into an NTSC device? Fine sir, we'll just trim 100 lines off the thing and it'll cram in there a treat. Obviously the lines are not all off the bottom, no you have to whip them out surreptitiously from every other line or so.

This is almost like de-interlacing an Amiga hi-res image. Try it yourself. Pick a nicely detailed image in hi-res lace, preferably with text in it. Now use Art Dept Pro 2 to convert it into a plain hi-res picture. Urgh.

OK, not only do you have less lines but you also have more frames in NTSC. In PAL you have a video signal which runs at 50Hz, that's two fields per frame with 25 frames per second and 625 lines.

In NTSC you have a signal which runs at 60Hz, which at the same two fields per frame you end up with 30 frames per second, and 525 lines.

So going from PAL to NTSC you lose 100 lines and gain five frames. Going from NTSC to PAL gains you 100 lines and loses five frames. Where do these gains and losses come from and go to?

In order to create a frame with 625 lines from a frame with 525 you have to interpolate – that is, examine each line pixel by pixel and make a best guess about what it looks like spread over say five lines.

After that you have to lose these extra frames somewhere. In the old days they used to do just that, lose a frame every once in a while, but of course it's all a bit more subtle now, with the transition

> *It's a US peripheral and that's the way it'll stay*

between lost frames being blurred and smoothed. That's one way. In reverse you have to go from a 625 line image down to a 525 line image, which means you have to interpolate the other way.

Take a bunch of lines and figure out (in real time) what they should look like if they were only one line. And don't forget that's before you even think of moving any of this stuff around using digital video effects.

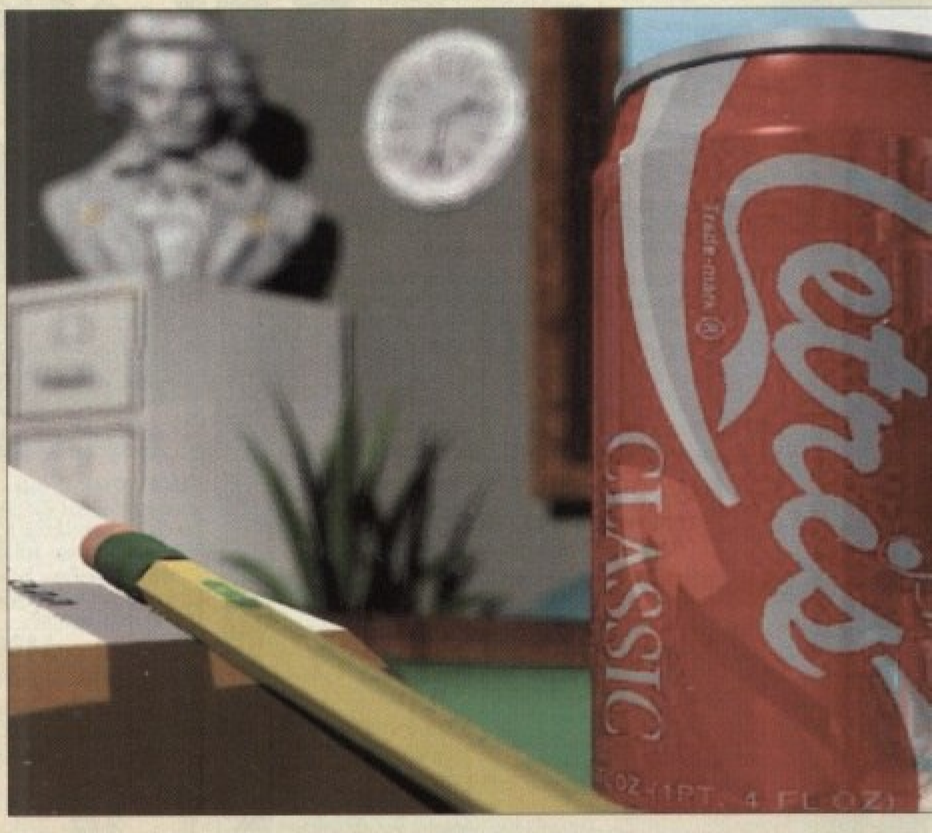
And in the Video Toaster with STD CON you are doing this process both ways in real time. It's bad enough doing this process one way and only after the editing stage, but both ways.

Add to all these other problems another little twist. The new Video Toaster supplied with the Toaster 4000 system is a different board to previous revisions. Unless it's carefully tweaked and the little motherboard switches are precisely trimmed you can't get the machine to work, unless of course the signals it's getting are pure NTSC and nothing but. Double tricky.

This has prevented a lot of magazines from reviewing the VT as they don't have the kind of equipment or knowledge that I and my video chums have access to, which is why I have a Video Toaster myself.

It's not useful for very many things, and I have to keep installing and de-installing it when I want to use it because it takes up so much room on disk. The Video Toaster is something you have to be very serious about before you commit yourself to it.

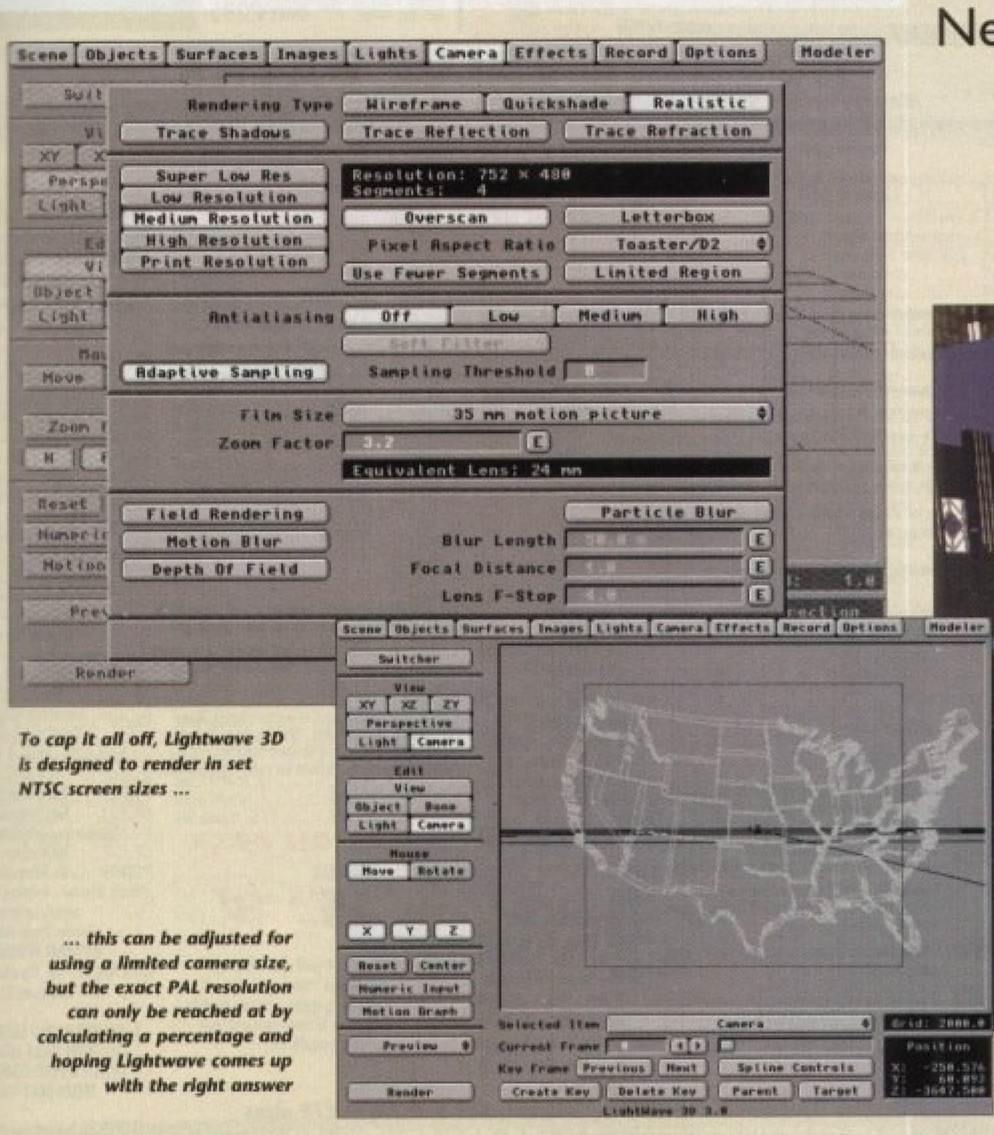
Basically you're getting the gist by now that the PAL Video Toaster isn't quite with us, as much as we would like it to be. It is the coolest piece of hardware around, and it has a certain charisma which few other peripherals have, but it is a US only product and for the foreseeable future that is the way it will remain.



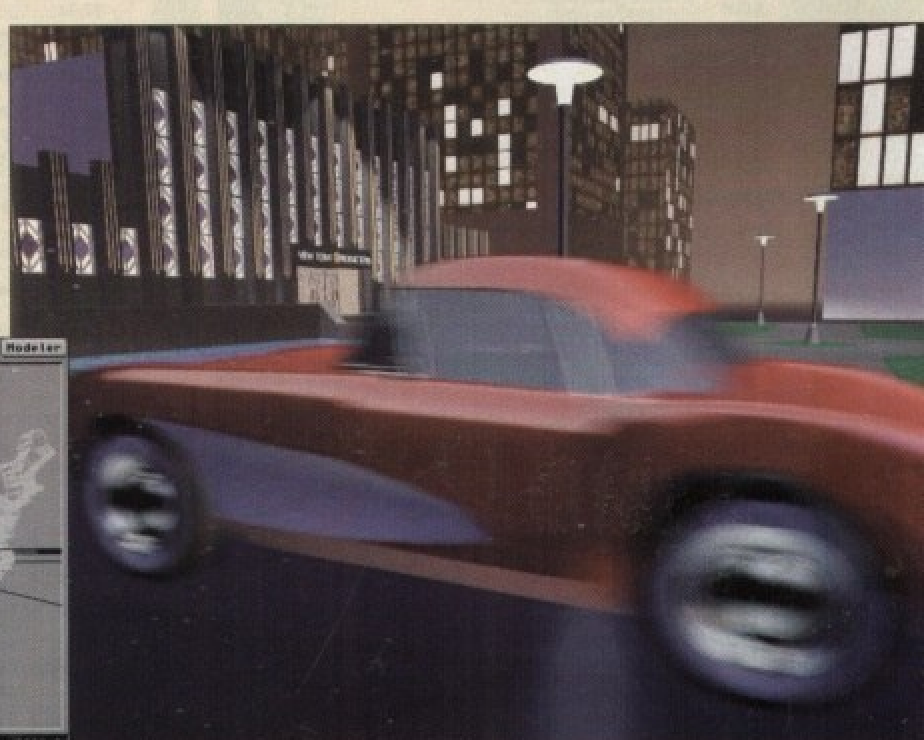
*Subtle effects such as depth of field would suffer most in the conversion from PAL to NTSC*

# myth toasted!

## NewTek Video Toaster user Phil South pops up with a few good reasons why the PAL Toaster is not here after all


*To cap it all off, Lightwave 3D is designed to render in set NTSC screen sizes ...*

*... this can be adjusted for using a limited camera size, but the exact PAL resolution can only be reached at by calculating a percentage and hoping Lightwave comes up with the right answer*


*If you want motion blur, Real 3D v2 is still your only good PAL bet*

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| CDTV | 179 | XT/AT BBoard | 50/91 |
| A590 20/40MB | 129/159 | | |

OTHER ACCESSORIES - PLEASE ASK.
*Acceptance of pre-V2 machines may be limited

## A4000/ 30 & 40

**A4000/30:** AGA Chip Set + 68030 processor, 68882 25/50 MHz co-processor option, 256,000 colours from 16.6M, scan doubling for flicker free display, Mouse, Amiga 3.5"/1.76 MB 3.5" drive, Hard Drive as below, Amiga DOS 3.0 system and utilities, **Next day on-site warranty**
**A4000/40:** As above, but featuring the blistering 68040 processor, with full floating point facilities **NOT** EC version. UK models with on-site warranty...**NOT** imports!

TRADE IN AVAILABLE

| HD SIZE MB | A4000/30 1+1MB SUBTRACT £70 | A4000/30 2+2MB STANDARD VERSION | A4000/30 2+4MB SUPER EXP. VERSION | A4000/40 2+4MB | EXTRAS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 80 | WARNING - 1 + 1MB A4000s will not run most serious AGA s/w packages, if required, subtract £70 from 2 + 2MB prices | 965 | ADD £80 • ADD £80 • ADD £80 2 + 4 MB version comes with 2MB chip RAM + one 4MB chip of fast RAM, for on-board expansion to 16MB. We do not fit two x 2MB chips of fast RAM, which gives on-board expansion of only 8MB. | 1889 | Extra 2MB for 2+2 versions £99 • Extra 4MB for 2+4 versions £159 • Microvitec Cubscan 1440 recommended £399.99 • Same day warranty £39.99, extra 2 yrs £99.99 |
| 120 | | 1054 | | 1915 | |
| 160 | | 1079 SPECIAL | | 1959 | |
| 240 | | 1149 | | 2139 | |
| 340 | | 1279 | | 2299 | |
| 540 | | 1599 | | 2459 | |

A4000/30 CO-PROs
68882 25 MHz....................ADD £70
68882 50MHz....................ADD £160
Fitting FOC if purchasing A4000

## CD³² CONSOLE
### LIMITED STOCKS NOW

### CD32 SOFTWARE

15 to 20 titles specially written for the CD32 should be in stock by the time you read this, including Syndicate, Zool 2, Jurassic Park, Chaos Engine, Robocod, many of which include a full CD music track alongside the game. About half of existing CDTV titles are compatible. CD32 will also play normal music CDs and CD+G discs

**CD³²**
Standard warranty is 12 months return to base.
12 months on-site warranty £39.99
Extra 2yrs on-site warranty £69.99

CD³² Console (with Oscar AGA, Diggers +Joypad FREE)
**£279**
CD³² + FMV Card as above
PLUS FREE MUSIC VIDEO DISC
**£465**

AVAILABLE NOW!
Full Motion Video module for CD³² (with Free Music Video Disc).......£1[illegible]
COMING SOON
Floppy drive, Keyboard, Mouse CD³² for A1200

## A500/600/CDTV

**STARTER PACK**
A Must for new users!
Microswitched joystick, "Get the Most from your Amiga" book, 10 Blank discs, 80 capacity lockable disc box, mouse mat, dust cover, Virus Killer.

A500+ and A600s come complete with mouse, modulator to connect to TV, or monitor lead as required, all cables, manuals, operating discs and utilities

REFURBISHED UNITS ONLY AVAILABLE

| | INCLUDED AS STANDARD | ALONE £ | PLUS STARTER £ | WARRANTY | EXTRAS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A500+ 1MB | | 179.99 | 194.99 | 12 months return to base | Extra 1MB £25 |
| A500+ CARTOON CLASSICS | CAPTAIN PLANET, LEMMINGS, THE SIMPSONS, DPAINT III* | 194.99 | 209.99 | | |
| A600 SD 1MB | - | 174.90 | 189.90 | 12 months at home | Extra 1MB £35 • 2Mb PCMCIA £109 • 4MB PCMCIA £169 • Romsharer £45 |
| A600 SD WILD, WEIRD AND WICKED | SILLY PUTTY, F1 GRAND PRIX, PUSHOVER, DELUXE PAINT III*, 700 CLIP ART SET | 194.99 | 209.99 | | |
| A600 HD 20 | | 259.99 | 274.99 | | |
| EPIC PACK PLUS 40 | EPIC, ROME, MYTH, TRIVIAL PURSUIT, AMIGA TEXT, DELUXE PAINT III*, 700 CLIP ART SET | 274.90 | 289.90 | | |
| 64 | | 339.99 | 404.99 | | |
| 85 | | 389.99 | 404.99 | | |
| A600 HD 80 | - | 365.99 | 379.99 | 12 months return base | |
| 120 | | 415.99 | 429.99 | | |
| 210 | | 569.99 | 584.99 | | |
| CDTV MULTI MEDIA | AUDIO DISCS/ CD PLAYER, KEYB'D, F.DRIVE, MOUSE, REMOTE CONTROLLER, CADDY, WELCOME DISC, FISH DISC | 229.99 | 244.99 | | Brickette £45 |
| CBM 1084 SD | + LEADS | 178.90 | | 1 year | PiP Monitor to TV Converter – £99 |
| CBM 1940 | LEADS. IDEAL FOR AGA | 269.99 | | 1 year | |
| Philips 8833 II | LEADS. T & SWIVEL £10 | 209.99 | | 1 year at home | |
| Star LC100C | TOP VALUE 9 PIN COLOUR PRINTER | 149.99 | 159.99 | 1year | |
| Citizen 240C | 24PIN COLOUR | 252.90 | 262.90 | 2 year | |

Return to base HD versions are SD units fitted with top quality 3rd party drives and come with install disc + full documentation. *DPIII needs 2MB for animation on HD models.

## A1200

| | |
|---|---|
| 1200 2MB | 269 |
| 1200 +20MB HD | 379 |
| 1200 +60MB HD | 439 |
| 1200 +80MB HD | 469 |
| 1200 +120MB HD | 519 |
| 1200 +207MB HD | 589 |
| Extra 4MB + clock fitted | ADD £200 |

**CBM APPROVED HARD DRIVES
Full legal installation/utility disc and documentation and come with CBM on-site warranty service.

DON'T FORGET YOUR STARTER PACK! ADD £15 (SEE VALUE PACKS BELOW)

**WITH ANY COMPUTER**
ZOOL, STRIKER, PINBALL DREAMS & TRANSWRITE OR LEMMINGS, SIMPSONS, CAPTAIN PLANET, PLUS DP III & GFA BASIC
**ADD £14.95**

**SPECIAL**
Deskjet 500C and Starter Pack with any Amiga ONLY £285

FREE WITH ALL 1200s
NIGEL MANSELL AGA, TROLLS AGA AND CHALLENGE PACK
4 (top games)
or WORKS PLATINUM
(see Home App. Pack below)
OR DESKTOP DYNAMITE PACK
Wordsworth 2 AGA, Deluxe Paint 4 AGA, Oscar AGA + Dennis, Print Manager
ADD £49 (1200s only)
OR FREE WITH 80MB & 120MB VERSIONS PUBLISHER'S CHOICE
RRP £99.99
inc Kindwords - WP, Pagesetter DTP, Artists Choice - Art Pack, Headline Font Pack
Limited - While Stocks Last

## HOBBYTE VALUE PACKS

Hobbyte are famous for their packs, allowing you to choose what you want, whilst still benefitting from package deal savings.
Remember, a bargain is only a bargain when you like what you get! So, if you aren't Wild, Weird or Wicked, Sleepwalker sends you to sleep, Space Ace leaves you feeeling ... Paradroid does worse, if Basic basically isn't you, exercise your options and get real value for money from Hobbyte

### TRAMPY'S AND NODDY'S PACK

Fun and educational for 2 to 11 years
(Some help may be required)
SPECIAL WITH AMIGA £39 | ALONE £59

| | |
|---|---|
| Noddy's Playtime OR Big Adventure OR Merlins Maths | 8 magical learning games at 3 levels, PLUS Junior Art pack, keyboard overlay and map. 6 National Curriculum oriented games, stage 2, 7 to 11 |
| The Shoe People OR Fun School 2 | 6 games with Trampy and friends, 6 years and under. The "Fun School" suite have won every award going. 5/6 wonderful animated games. 3 to 11 years, specify age. |
| Fun School 3 or 4 OR ADI Jnr Reading OR Counting | The loveable extra terrestrial entertains 4 - 7 year olds and helps towards achieving National Curriculum levels 1, 2+ 3 |
| Deluxe Paint II + 700 Clip Art pics | Pics inc. children, Fairytale + Legend characters, Sport, Cartoons, etc. |
| Hobbyte Primary Educational PD Pack | Containing 10 fun while you learn games |
| Hobbyte 30 Easy Children's Games Pack | Simple games, or those with very easy levels. Even the youngest will be able to use some of these |

### SERIOUS USER'S PACK

Interested in music, programming and graphics? Then this pack is for you!
WITH AMIGA £39 | ALONE £49

| | |
|---|---|
| Easy Amos | THE programming language. Wonderful manual is simple and entertaining - ideal for complete novices |
| OR AMOS Professional ADD £10 for this option | 97% AF rating - the second highest rating EVER given. Learn to professionally create your own games, utilities. Loads of sample progs included |
| Hobbyte AMOS PD Greats | Dozens of utilities, Protracker music modules, example programmes that no AMOS programmer would be without. |
| Deluxe Paint III, plus 700 Clip Art pics | Create your own designs to incorporate into your AMOS progs |
| MIDI Recording Studio & MIDI Interface | If you have a MIDI instrument, this is everything you need to compose and edit your music |
| OR AmigaVision | Powerful presentation and production tool |

### STARTER PACK

A must for new users! All you need in one value pack
WITH AMIGA £15 | ALONE £25

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 blank discs | Make working copies of Workbench and other original applications discs as soon as you get them |
| Virus Killer | Check discs regularly, especially if sharing with friends |
| Mouse mat | Helps prevent dirt/dust collecting on mouse contacts |

Plus Microswitched Joystick, 80 cap. lockable disc box, Dust Cover

### HOT BUG GAMES PACK

The top-selling Hobbyte Hot Lot pack now includes the ultimate joystick !!!
WITH AMIGA £44 | ALONE £59

| | |
|---|---|
| "THE BUG" | The only joystick **ever** to be given a Gold rating **92% AF**, positive single-handed action, small and lovely! |
| 10 "Hot List" Games The GREATEST! | See listing to the right for current **HOT LIST**, or phone for latest changes. Children's games available. |
| 80 Prog. Hobbyte PD Greats Pack II 10 blank discs, mouse mat, 80 capacity lockable disc box, plus dust cover | Includes top games like Battlecars, Star Trek, Computer Conflict, Megaball, dozens of arcade classics, board classics and 'shoot-em-ups', Utilities, Word Processor, Spreadsheet, Database + Desktop Publisher and the ultimate virus killers - a must for every Amiga owner! |

### HOME APPLICATION PACK

Perfect for all Home Office needs
SPECIAL WITH AMIGA £29 | ALONE £49

| | |
|---|---|
| Virus Killer Disk, 80 Prog. Hobbyte PD Greats Pack - see 'Hottest Lot Pack' The Works Platinum | WP with UK spell chck, Thesaurus spreadsheet, 'Sideways' utility, database, graphics + comms module |
| Deluxe Paint III* with animation + 700 Clip Art pics Digita Home Accounts Any Two Hot List Titles | Keep track of credit card and bank accounts, budgets, etc |

**STOP PRESS!** Desktop Dynamite AGA pack (see 1200 box) £69 with Amiga £79 alone

### THE HOT LI...

GREAT individ... packaged gam... BETTER THAN T... REST !!
(previous RRPs ... £39.99 each)
ANY 10 £29...
Or see packs ...
Thunderbirds
F1 Grand Prix
Silly Putty - 90%
Elf/Toki/Puzznic
Paperboy
Hunt for Red October
Colossus Chess
Challenge Golf
Battleships
Graeme Souness Soccer
Neighbours
Frankenstein
Captain Planet
Silkworm Helicopter
Edd the Duck
Lemmings
Round the Bend
Continental Circus
World Cricket
Bart Simpson
Spiderman/Captain America
Ice Hockey
Xenon - C+VG Game of the ...
Blade Warrior
AWARD WINNER
Space Ace, Kick Off

‡ PARTICULARLY SUITABLE CHILDREN (MAY NEED ...
@ NOT A1200 COMPATIBLE TITLES MAY VARY

*DPIII needs 2MB for animation ...

## NO OTHER DEALER CAN BEAT OUR CREDENTIALS

- Multi-million company with 9 years experience in Commodore product and here to stay
- Commodore trained staff are friendly and helpful and are parents, multimedia, educational, games, programming or technical specialists (usually more than one!)
- Open 9-6 pm Monday to Saturday and 10.00 am to 4.30 pm Sundays PLUS December late nights on Thursdays (St Albans only) for convenient shopping.
- Callers welcome for advice and demonstration at our 1600+ sq ft High St, Town Centre branches
- Same day despatch for most orders received by 5.30 pm; express am and Saturday services available
- Hardware carefully handled and delivered safely and reliably by caged, insured, top name courier service
- Pre-despatch testing on Amiga systems
- Free 30 day courier collection and delivery of NEW replacement.(except product with on-site maintenance)
- Hotline support and in-house engineers
- Upgrade and trade in offers to keep you up to date
- Exceptional after sales service
- BFPO and export welcome

## NOT JUST ANOTHER MAIL ORDER COMPANY

For years a major player in Amiga Mail Order, Hobbyte also boast extensive expertise and experience in specification and support of multi-machine and specialist systems. Hobbyte have been recommended and trained by Commodore and successfully won major orders and support contracts from London Boroughs, MOD, educational establishments etc. We are pleased to be placed on tender lists.
This expertise is available to all our customers.

• AMIGA SPECIALISTS • STAR GOLD DEALER • CDTV CENTRE • PHILIPS APPOINTED DEALER

# MONITORS/ACCESSORIES

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|---|---|
| [illegible] + leads + 2 games | 188.99 |
| [illegible] mon. +leads + on-site | 199.90 |
| [illegible] stand for 8833 | 12.99 |
| [illegible] sync .39 dpi AGA monitor + speakers | 269.99 |
| [illegible] sync .28 dpi AGA monitor + speakers | 369.99 |

**[illegible] CUB-SCAN 1440** 14" .28dp for 1200/4000, in- [illegible] scan rates between 15KHz (default on boot-up) and 40 KHz [illegible] modes in this range. With tilt and swivel stand. "CUA BEST [illegible]" ....399.99

| | |
|---|---|
| [illegible] Cub-scan .28dp for 1200/4000 as above, but 20" | 1079.99 |
| [illegible] Cub-scan .1782, 17", .27dp, 29-82 KHz horiz. scan | 889.99 |
| [illegible] for A1200/Microvitec | 29.99 |
| [illegible] Multi-Sync for 1200/4000 models | 595.00 |
| [illegible] Hi-res SVGA .28dp inc. tilt & swivel | 259.99 |
| [illegible] Multi-Sync | 544.99 |
| [illegible] tuner+remote with sub picture for monitors | 113.99 |
| [illegible] Brilliance 2110 21" | POA |

# FLOPPY DRIVES

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|---|---|
| [illegible] external drive, daisychain + on/off | 51.50 |
| [illegible] 3.5 external drive, beige | 56.50 |
| [illegible] with anti click + Blitz back up and virus protector | 59.90 |
| [illegible] above, Cyclone compatible | 64.99 |
| [illegible] PC 880B | 124.99 |
| [illegible] 1.76MB ext. drive for any Amiga (WB 2) | 98.50 |
| [illegible] 1.76MB ext. drive for any Amiga (WB 2) + 10 HD Discs | 104.95 |
| [illegible] internal floppy for 1500/2/3 4000 | 94.90 |
| [illegible] internal floppy for500/600/1200 | 94.90 |

# HARD DRIVES/ACCELERATORS

**[illegible]/2000**

| | |
|---|---|
| [illegible] | 196.99 |
| [illegible] | 289.90 |
| [illegible] | 374.90 |
| [illegible] | 479.90 |
| [illegible] 25MHZ 1MB | 384.99 |
| [illegible] 40MHZ 4MB | 684.99 |
| [illegible] 50MHZ 4MB | 984.99 |
| [illegible] 33MHZ 4MB | 1284.99 |
| [illegible] for above | POA |
| [illegible] 80MB HD | 234.90 |

**[illegible]/4000**

| | |
|---|---|
| [illegible] controller for 4000 | 299.90 |
| [illegible] | 269.99 |
| [illegible] internal | 289.90 |
| [illegible] internal | 359.90 |
| [illegible] 44MB cartridge | 69.50 |
| [illegible] 88MB cartridge | 99.50 |
| [illegible] | 159.99 |
| [illegible] | 169.99 |
| [illegible] | 199.99 |
| [illegible] | 229.99 |
| [illegible] | 329.99 |
| [illegible] | 439.99 |
| [illegible] | 599.99 |
| [illegible] fitting by our engineers ADD | £15 |

**[illegible]**

| | |
|---|---|
| [illegible] | 392.00 |
| [illegible] | 489.00 |
| [illegible] | 589.99 |
| [illegible] | 693.99 |
| [illegible] | 218.99 |
| [illegible] | 194.90 |
| [illegible] | 296.99 |
| [illegible] | 394.99 |
| [illegible] REFURBS AVAILABLE...FROM £169 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| A590 20MB | 199.99 |
| A500 Internal 20MB HD | 184.99 |
| A500 Internal 60MB HD | 249.99 |
| A500 Internal 80MB HD | 279.99 |
| A500 Internal 120MB HD | 339.99 |
| Trifecta SCSI 80MB HD | 289.99 |
| A570 for 2.04 1MB 500 | 139.99 |

**A600/1200**

| | |
|---|---|
| GVP 85 MB HD 600/1200 | 274.99 |
| GVP 1230 030 accel for 1200 | 239.90 |
| GVP1230/40MHZ/4MB 68882 Co-Pro for 1200 | 479.99 |
| M1230 XA 40MHz | 269.99 |
| M1230XA 40MHz 4MB | 429.99 |
| M1230 XA 50MHz 4MB | 519.99 |
| Microbotics VXL30 25MHz | 219.99 |
| VXL 30 40MHz | 339.99 |
| 2MB Burst RAM for above | 179.99 |

**A600/1200 HD UPGRADES**

| | SELF FITTING* (on-site invalidated) | CBM APPROVED FITTING** (with on-site) |
|---|---|---|
| 20MB | 85 | - |
| 40MB | 145 | - |
| 60MB | 175 | 199 |
| 80/85MB | 189 | 249 |
| 120/127MB | 245 | 329 |
| 240/250MB | 349 | 499 |
| INTERNAL CLOCK | | POA |

*with cable & disc ADD £14.99 for Hobbyte fitting
**Including FREE courier collection & delivery

# AMIGA 24 BIT HARDWARE

TOASTER COMING SOON!

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|---|---|
| DCTV | 376.99 |
| GVP IV + VIU-S | 965.99 |
| GVP IV + VIU-CT | 1255.99 |
| Impact Vision 24 | POA |

**HARLEQUIN 32 BIT FRAMEMAKER BOARD**

• 16.7 million colour photo realistic display • real time 24 bit animation • Optional Alpha Channel - superimpose high quality graphics onto live signal, or smoothly blend paint images • Optional Double Buffering - 2, 24 bit displays instantly available

**SUPPORTS:** TV Paint, Vlab, Calligari, Sympatica, Ad Pro, Real 3D + others

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|---|---|
| H1500 1.5MB | £929 |
| H2000 2MB + Alpha | £999 |
| H3000 3MB +D/Buffer | £1099 |
| H4000 4MB + Alpha +D/Buffer | £1279 |
| Genlock | £199 |
| *H2000 Plus | £1479 |
| *H4000 Plus | £1579 |

**FREE V lab Framegrabber with Harlequin Plus**

*Plus versions inc, Genlock, extra screen resolutions + modes, 4 Alpha Chanel + more

AMAZING PRICE!

PICASSO 24 BIT GRAPHICS CARD + FREE Personal Paint Card Lite ....**£324.99**

PICCOLO 24 BIT GRAPHICS CARD
16.7 million colours, on-board blitter, 1MB exp to 2MB video RAM, fully programmable resolution, double buffering + multiple screen + AREXX. support. Supports leading graphics packages/applications. With FREE TV Paint Jnr ....**£379.99**

RAINBOW III 24 BIT GRAPHICS CARD + VIDEO CONTROLLER ....**£1489.99**
Similar to Piccolo but with 4MB video RAM, programmable resolution to 1600 x 1280, built-in video controller inc. 110MHz clock. With FREE TV Paint Jnr.

PEGGY MPEG VIDEO CARD ....**£479.99**
Take 24 bit animations from disc or other storage devices and replay in real-time through the Amiga! Use integrated genlock to overlay Amiga graphics for sophisticated titling and special effects, to produce stunning promotional/training videos, or games with live video footage. Near SVHS quality, 16.7M colours, MPEG tools + library functions, 25 frames/sec playback.

| | |
|---|---|
| YC Output module for Peggy | £129.99 |
| MPeg encoder option for Peggy | £349.99 |

**OPAL VISION** (for 3000/4000)
24 bit board v2+ Opal Paint, Opal Presents, Opal Hotkey, Opal AminMATE ....589.99
**ALSO WITH IMAGINE SOFTWARE**
IF YOU HAVE PURCHASED OPALVISION, YOU MAY HAVE RECEIVED VOUCHERS AGAINST THE FOLLOWING NEW PRODUCTS., WHICH WILL BE ACCEPTED BY HOBBYTE IN PART PAYMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| Video Processor for Opal Vision WITH VOUCHERS | 647.99 |
| Video Suite for Opal Vision WITH VOUCHERS | 647.99 |
| Scan Rate Converter for OpalVision WITH VOUCHERS | 647.99 |
| Retina 24 bit graphics card + 1MB + VD Paint | 339.00 |
| Retina 24 bit graphics card + 2MB + VD Paint | 395.00 |
| Retina 24 bit graphics card + 4MB + VD Paint | 489.00 |
| V lab 24 bit real time digitiser 1200/600/500 ext | 334.99 |
| V lab 24 bit real time digitiser 1500/3000/4000 int | 289.99 |
| V Lab 4000/3000 int SVHS | 334.99 |

FREE V lab Framegrabber with Harlequin

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| G Gate 386sx 25MHz | 386.99 |
| GVP 286 for GVPII +530 | 146.99 |
| GVP 40/4 for 1500 | 945.99 |
| AT Once | 214.99 |
| 386 Bridgeboard | 199.99 |
| 486 Bridgeboard | 299.99 |
| Emplant | 245.90 |
| Emplant Deluxe | 339.90 |

# SCANNERS & DIGITISERS

| | |
|---|---|
| Epson GT 6500, 600dpi 24 bit A4 inc. Scan s/w | 779.00 |
| Epson GT 8000, 800dpi 24 bit A4 inc. Scan s/w | 1129.00 |
| Power Hand Scanner, 400 dpi, 64 Greyscale, Powerscan software | 88.99 |
| Power Hand Scanner as above, V3 for 1200/4000 | 104.99 |
| OCR software for Power Scanner | 48.50 |
| Power Colour Hand Scanner | 219.49 |
| Sharp JX 100 A6 Scanner + scanlab s/w up to 18 bit | 469.99 |
| Summa Sketch II A4 with s/w/A3 Tablet Digitiser | 359.99/529.99 |

# GENLOCKS/MODEMS

| | |
|---|---|
| Rendale 8802 (1200 compat) | 139.99 |
| Rendale 8802 FMC | 159.95 |
| Rendale 8802 SVHS/8860 | 469.99 |
| Hama Genlock 292 | 289.90 |
| Hama Genlock S290 | 689.99 |
| GVP G-Lock | 289.00 |
| Video Pilot v330 | 1094.94 |
| Rocgen+ 1200 compat | 158.50 |
| Rocgen Rockey | 119.50 |
| Supra 2400 Modem | 78.95 |
| Supra Fax Modem | 148.90 |

**SUPRA 2400+ FAX/MODEM**
With 9600 Fax, 2400 Data Fax Software, Atalk 3 Comms S/W, Modem Leads & Power supply ....**£148.99**

**SUPRA 14440 FAX/MODEM**
As above, but up to 14,400 Fax/Data ....**£279.00**

Rocgen plus Rockey Bundle ....**£239.90**

# ACCESSORIES & DISCS

| | |
|---|---|
| A500/600/1200 printer centre | 28.99 |
| A500/1200 control centre | 34.90 |
| A600 control centre | 27.90 |
| Brickette CDTV Joystick adapt. | 39.99 |
| 10 Blank DS/DD discs in box | 4.99 |
| 10 Blank DS/HD discs | 6.99 |
| A520 Modulator | 29.99 |
| Alien/Batman/T2 Joystick | 10.99 |
| Bug Joystick | 11.99 |
| CDTV Keyboard | 54.99 |
| 50 Blank DS/DD discs | 17.99 |
| 50 Blank DS/HD discs | 27.99 |

# EXPANSION

| | |
|---|---|
| A500 512k Ram Exp+Clock | 21.99 |
| A500+ 1MB exp | 29.99 |
| A500+ 2MB, exp. to 8MB | 149.99 |
| A601 | 37.99 |
| A600/1200 2MB exp (card) | 137.99 |
| A600/1200 4MB exp (card) | 169.99 |
| CDTV 1MB exp + Super Agnus | 157.99 |
| A500 Rom Sharer 1.3 | 37.95 |
| A500 Rom Sharer 2.04 | 38.95 |
| A600 Rom Sharer + 1.3 | 49.95 |
| A2065 Ethernet Card | 229.95 |
| Blizzard 1200 4MB | 159.90 |
| Blizzard 1200 8MB | 299.90 |
| Blizzard 1200 4MB 25MHz | 299.90 |
| Blizzard 1200 4MB 50MHz | POA |
| PC 1208 bare | 55.90 |
| PC 1208 1MB | 97.90 |
| PC 1208 2MB | 137.90 |
| PC 1208 4MB | 214.90 |
| PC 1208 8MB | 396.90 |
| Above with 33MHz FPU | 74.90 |
| Above with 50MHz FPU | 139.90 |
| MBX 1200 +68881 14MHz | 119.99 |
| MBX 1200 4MB+68881 14MHz | 278.90 |
| MBX 1200 4MB+68882 25MHz | 358.90 |
| MBX 1200 4MB+68882 50MHz | 428.90 |
| 2MB version MBX boards above | subtract £100 |
| CBM 2.1 upgrade kit NOW IN | 74.99 |
| Amitec 16bit 0MB exp for 1200 | 76.90 |
| Amitec 16bit 4MB exp | POA |

**Chip fitting and board upgrade available, by our qualified engineers....POA**

# PRINTERS

2YR WARRANTY WITH CITIZEN

| | ALONE | WITH STARTER PACK |
|---|---|---|
| Citizen 120+D | 111.99 | ADD £12.99 |
| Star LC20 | 116.99 | |
| Citizen 90 mono* | 144.49 | |
| Citizen 90 colour* | 154.49 | |
| Citizen 124D | 176.99 | |
| Star LC 100 9 pin col | 149.99 | |
| Panasonic KXP2180 col | 159.90 | |
| Star LC200 col | 184.99 | |
| Star LC 24-20 II | 218.49 | |
| Star LC 24-100 24 pin | 173.49 | |
| Star LC 24-200 | 209.99 | |
| Star LC 24-200 col | 248.49 | |
| Panasonic KXP 2123 col | 209.99 | |
| Epson LQ 100 | 179.99 | |
| Epson LQ 570 | 259.90 | |
| Epson LQ 870 | 469.90 | |
| Epson LQ 1170 | 569.90 | |
| Citizen S200 24* | 184.99 | |
| Citizen S200 24 col* | 199.99 | |
| Citizen S240* | 187.90 | |
| Citizen S240C col* | 233.90 | |
| Citizen S24x col* | 325.90 | |
| Star LC24 - 30 Col | 218.90 | |
| Star LC24 - 300 Col | 275.90 | |
| Star SJ144 | 489.99 | |
| Citizen col Note. Printer III | POA | |

Welsh Character Set available on request for Citizen Swift 90,200 & 240

| | ALONE | WITH STARTER PACK |
|---|---|---|
| **UNBELIEVABLE INKJET PRICES!!** | | ADD £12.99 |
| HP Deskjet Port. | 249.00 | |
| Epson Stylus 800 | 249.90 | |
| Citizen Projet II | 228.90 | |
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As the Christmas shopping spree looms nearer, Stevie Kennedy examines the RAM expansions on offer

# RAM for one

New A1200 owners, or those who will be once the soot settles from Santa's exit up the chimney, could be forgiven for thinking that 2Mb of RAM is enough for just about anything.

After all, this is four times what the original A500 sported, and still double the amount found in the A500 Plus or A600. Why add more?

To a certain extent, this is fair comment, as 2Mb will suffice for any game you care to mention and a goodly number of more serious programs.

However, once a hard drive is added and the user boots from it then loads, say, a word processor using graphics in a document, the machine will slow down and eventually run out of memory.

Speed is affected because the 2Mb RAM in a basic A1200 is all chip RAM, the area to which the custom chips have direct access, and for program code this is the worst place to be.

## TRAP DOOR

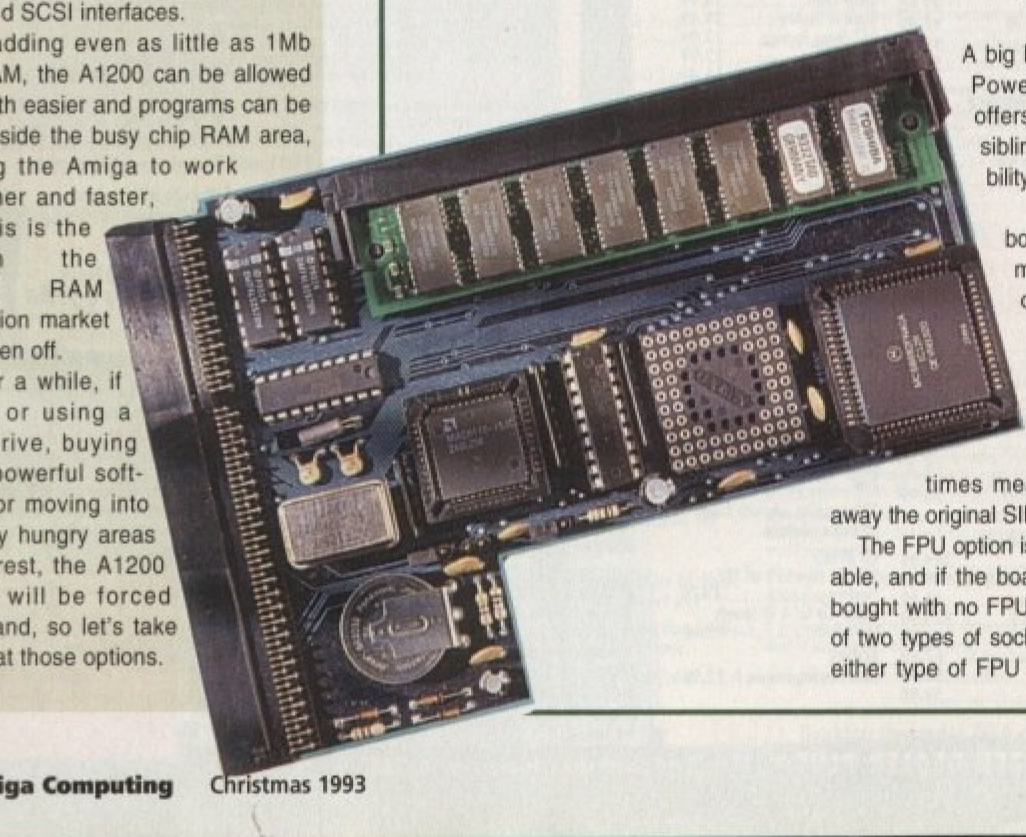
To avoid clashes with the memory accesses of Alice and Lisa, programs need fast RAM, and that's where the machine's trap door expansion slot comes in.

Like the older Amigas, the A1200 has a trap door on its underside which can be opened and used for peripherals without risk to the warranty. A 150-pin slot awaits a variety of devices, which now include RAM/FPU boards, 68030 accelerators, and SCSI interfaces.

By adding even as little as 1Mb fast RAM, the A1200 can be allowed to breath easier and programs can be run outside the busy chip RAM area, freeing the Amiga to work smoother and faster, and this is the reason the A1200 RAM expansion market has taken off.

After a while, if fitting or using a hard drive, buying more powerful software, or moving into memory hungry areas of interest, the A1200 owner will be forced to expand, so let's take a look at those options.

## Power Computing PC1208



A big brother for the PC1204, Power's latest RAM board offers similar features to its sibling but with added flexibility.

As RAM fits to this board in the form of SIMM modules, the user can choose to start with 1Mb RAM, then expand at a later date to 2Mb, 4Mb, or 8Mb, though this will sometimes mean chucking away the original SIMM.

The FPU option is again available, and if the board is initially bought with no FPU, the presence of two types of socket means that either type of FPU (pins on the outside or pins below, basically) can be fitted. It is therefore easier to shop around looking for the cheapest 68882 from a chip supplier.

More flexible than the standard PC1204, this card is a better bet for those with ambitions or the need to start with less and build up once the wallet recovers.

Supplier: Power Computing
Phone: 0234 843388
Price: £115 (1Mb) to £619 (8Mb and 50Mhz 68882)
Rating: 9

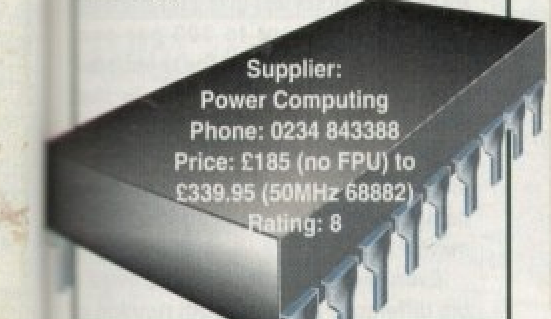
## Power Computing PC1204

One of the first available A1200 RAM expansions, the PC1204 is a cheap 4Mb board with FPU option designed to meet the needs of the A1200 owner who wants more memory but doesn't plan to expand much further.

Eight 70ns ZIP chips provide the fast RAM, and anything from a 20MHz 68881 to a 50MHz 68882 can be fitted to speed up maths-hungry programs such as 3D modellers and drawing packages. A battery backed-up clock is thrown in for good measure to remedy the A1200's lack of a time keeper.

Build quality is good, the solid PCB giving an impression of reliability, and the board should not conflict with peripherals attached to the PCMCIA port.

All in all, a cost-effective answer to basic fast RAM problems, though prospective buyers should note that there is no facility for adding extra RAM at a later date.




## Blizzard 1200/4

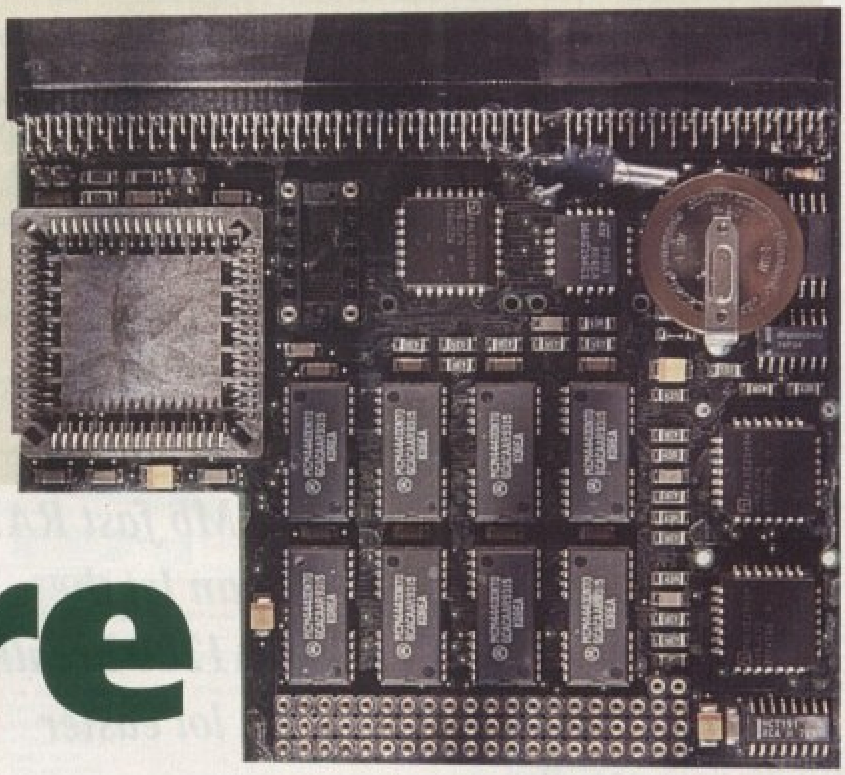
The Blizzard board is the smallest around at the moment and benefits from a very compact design in which every chip save the FPU is surface mounted.

Eight 70ns DRAMs provide the memory boost, and a further 4Mb can be added by buying and clipping on the ADD4 module, which brings the board up to size with the others. A battery backed-up clock rounds of this neat little card with the neatest little rechargeable battery we've seen.

Maths co-processors, either 68881 or 68882, can be added and the board is rated at up to 40MHz, so with a possible 8Mb RAM and the faster co-processors, there's a certain amount of upgradability, even though no SIMM slots are used.

The method of bunging an extra board on the end of the A1200/4 main PCB seems a little crude, and whether or not it will be as reliable as a SIMM socket is debatable. Keeping down the initial cost as it does, the method makes the Blizzard a good buy, though, and the extra 4Mb RAM is cheap at £159.



# e more

## Microbotics MBX1200

The MBX1200 is a RAM and FPU combination much like the PC1208 in that it utilises a SIMM socket for flexibility, enabling users to buy the board in 1Mb, 2Mb, 4Mb, or 8Mb configurations.

A co-processor socket provides expansion capabilities using the 68882, and with chips rated at up to 50MHz, A1200 owners with productivity in mind should find enough elbow room here.

Build quality, in common with all Microbotics products, is superb, and the solid ruggedness of the card gives one the impression that it could almost survive being driven over by a car.

Dark green PCBs, surface mounted components, and an air of solidity give the Microbotics products a quality feel matched only by the PC1208.







## A4000 options

Owners of the premier Amiga have probably the least choice of all, but this is amply compensated for by the simplest and most economic route to extra RAM. The A4000 motherboard can accept extra SIMMs up to a maximum of 16Mb in its four fast RAM slots, and this should be enough for most users.

Over and above this total, those with heavy memory requirements – such as those driving a flatbed scanner, or indulging in a great deal of graphics work – have only one option at present.

American company DKB will shortly release their Zorro III RAM board, capable of holding 128Mb of RAM using 16Mb SIMMs, and though the fully-populated board will no doubt be extremely expensive, it is the only choice for those in the high end of the market who need a great deal of memory.

For pricing details and availability of the DKB board, phone Silica Systems on 081-309 1111.

## Chip vs fast

The Amiga has two types of memory: chip RAM and fast RAM. The former was designed as an area of memory to which the custom chips, Denise and Agnus to start with, Lisa and Alice on the new machines, can read and write data directly.

For this reason, when chip RAM starts to run low, programs such as DPaint start to complain that they don't have enough memory to open a particular screen, and so on. The advent of the 2Mb chip RAM Amigas, with twice as much memory for graphics and sound, was a blessing to all.

Unfortunately, chip RAM is not the ideal place for program code to reside, and there are two main reasons. First of all, the custom chips will run out of chip RAM a lot faster if it is cluttered up with programs, and secondly the programs themselves will not run as quickly.

Competition with the custom chips for access to RAM is bad enough for speed, but when the programs themselves rob Alice and Lisa of RAM, they slow themselves down as well, and we're caught in a catch-22. The only way out of this vicious circle is to add fast RAM.

This extra memory cannot be directly accessed by the custom chips and is organised such that programs run at their best speed. In effect, a bit of fast RAM is the simplest and cheapest accelerator money can buy

## Price hike

Earlier this summer, a duo of natural disasters conspired to nobble the RAM chip industry and boost prices well above the lows to which they had sunk early in 1993.

In Japan, a fire at one chip factory and an earthquake near another temporarily forced chip prices up and provided the excuse the industry needed to keep them there.

PC box-shifters, struggling on tiny margins, and manufacturers of all kinds can make more profit on more expensive RAM chips, so it is unlikely that prices will fall very quickly even after the immediate shortage. Competition will inevitably drive them down, but it might be summer 1994 before we see real price cuts.

For the moment, then, A1200 owners with need for fast RAM but no burning requirement as yet for huge wads of the stuff would be advised to buy one of the slightly more expensive boards which offer 1Mb and 2Mb options and wait until RAM prices come down again before investing in a 4Mb SIMM.

None of the simple RAM and FPU cards have two SIMM slots, but some of the 68030 accelerators do, and this makes life much easier.

For example, owners of the GVP A1230 might opt to buy the card with a 2Mb SIMM, then add another 2Mb SIMM for a total of 4Mb without having to throw away or sell the original SIMM.

Potential upgraders with single slot cards should bear in mind that the original SIMM will have to be sold, traded in, or discarded when bumping up the memory, so a word with the suppliers on whether or not a trade in option exists is essential.

## Turbotech A41200




Another cheap 4Mb card, the Turbotech is more or less identical to Power's PC1204 with the important omission of an FPU option.

Consisting of eight 70ns ZIP chips and a battery backed-up clock, this is a no-nonsense card aimed at the home user with simple requirements for memory expansion and nothing else.

The Turbotech A41200 is built well, with the usual predominance of surface mounted components, and behaves well in use, so should render adequate service for the computer's lifetime.

As far as speeding up the Amiga is concerned, Turbotech's lack of a co-processor leaves it firmly anchored to the bottom of the market, but the addition of fast RAM will always give a machine regardless of extra chippery.




*' Even as little as 1Mb fast RAM can let the A1200 breath a lot easier '*

## Breath easy

Any Amiga working on a diet exclusively of chip RAM will suffer from a memory bottleneck which will inevitably lead to a slow down in operation.

Without the fast RAM in which to run, programs will compete with graphics and sound data for space, and the system will start to drag its feet.

With fast RAM added, everything becomes a great deal easier, and the program code has a space of its own in which to roam while the custom chips get on with the job of messing about with the data in chip RAM.

This is a rather simplistic picture, but the point is that chip RAM is designed to be used directly by the custom chips, and is where data such as sound and graphics are stored, and where screens are buffered or drawn in the background and so on.

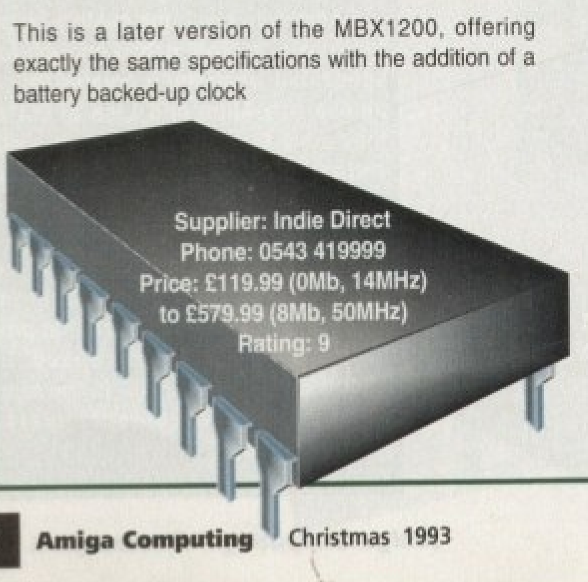
To shove program code in with this lot is asking for trouble, and that's why most manufacturers claim that their RAM expansions will give you anything from 100 per cent to 300 per cent speed boosts. In effect, the most obvious change users will see is that Workbench and other productivity packages run more smoothly. Games shouldn't be affected as most are designed with unexpanded Amigas in mind.

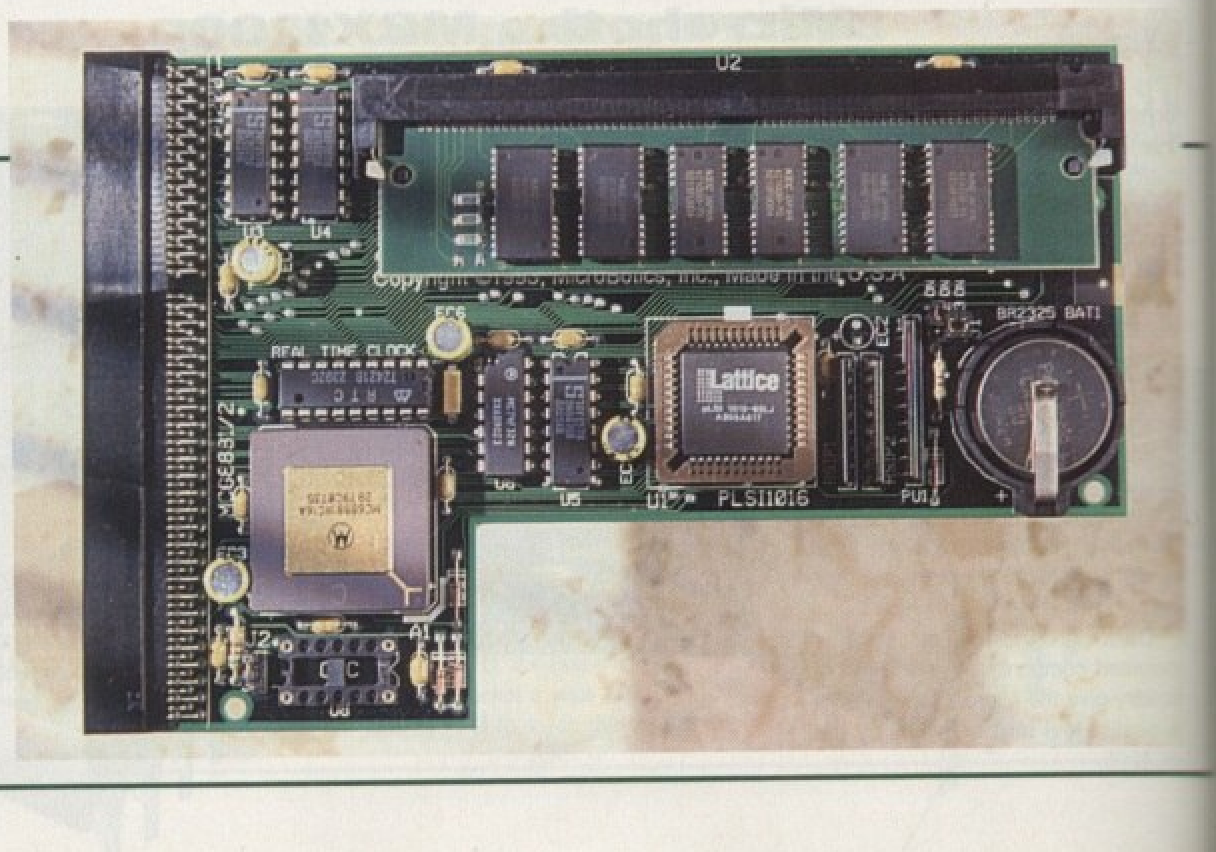
Even 1Mb of fast RAM would make a big difference to the smooth running of an A1200, and 2Mb should be enough to allow paint packages and other memory-hungry programs to run from hard drive without constantly running out of chip RAM.

The norm seems to be 4Mb these days, but this can be expensive, and users are advised to take a close look at the expansion boards which have a variety of configurations.

## Microbotics MBX1200z

This is a later version of the MBX1200, offering exactly the same specifications with the addition of a battery backed-up clock



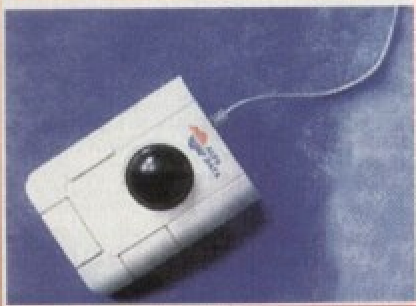
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### AMIGA A1200

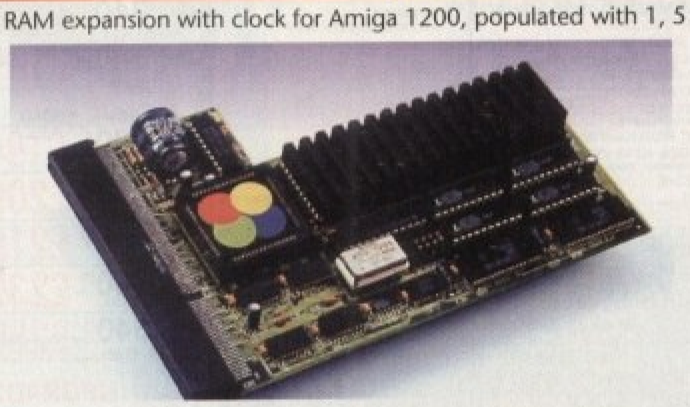
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| 3-button trackball for Amiga | £29.99 |
| "Cristal" trackball for Amiga | £34.99 |
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| 512Kb RAM expansion for A500+ | £16.99 |
| 1Mb RAM expansion for A500+ | £19.95 |
| External 3.5" floppy drive | £50.00 |
| Kickstart switch for A500, A2000 | £14.95 |
| Kickstart switch for A600 | £29.95 |
| Electronic boot selector | £14.95 |
| Auto mouse/joystick switch | £10.99 |
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Internal RAM expansion with clock for Amiga 1200, populated with 1, 5 or 9Mb



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| AF1200 4Mb with clock, no Oscillator, no FPU Processor | £199 |
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| AF1200 5Mb with clock, Oscillator, 20MHz 68882 FPU | £290 |
| AF1200 5Mb with clock, Oscillator, 25MHz 68882 FPU | £295 |
| AF1200 5Mb with clock, Oscillator, 33MHz 68882 FPU | £299 |
| AF1200 8Mb with clock, no Oscillator, no FPU Processor | £359 |
| AF1200 9Mb with clock, Oscillator, 16MHz 68882 FPU | £415 |
| AF1200 9Mb with clock, Oscillator, 20MHz 68882 FPU | £420 |
| AF1200 9Mb with clock, Oscillator, 25MHz 68882 FPU | £429 |
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### AMIGA 4000 (25MHz 68030)

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|---|---|
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| 4Mb RAM 120Mb HD | £1069 |
| 4Mb RAM 214Mb HD | £1169 |
| 4Mb RAM 245Mb HD | £1269 |
| 4Mb RAM 340Mb HD | £1369 |
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|---|---|
| 6Mb RAM 80Mb HD | £1919 |
| 6Mb RAM 120Mb HD | £2069 |
| 6Mb RAM 214Mb HD | £2169 |
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|---|---|
| Fold a Fax Modem | £129 |
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|---|---|
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| A500 ½Mb + Clock | £23.95 |
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| A600 1Mb | £21.95 |
| A600 1Mb + Clock | £31.95 |
| 1Mb SIMM (GVP) | £29.95 |
| 4Mb SIMM (GVP) | £149.95 |
| 1Mb 72PIN (A4000) | £99.00 |
| 4Mb 72PIN (A4000) | POA |
| PCMCIA 2Mb | £89.00 |
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| | |
|---|---|
| 0Mb RAM | £299 |
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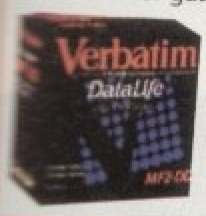
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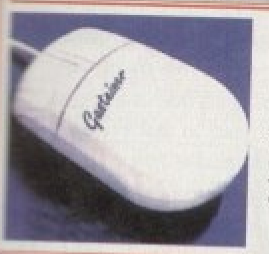
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Autoboot, Autoconfig and Zero wait states

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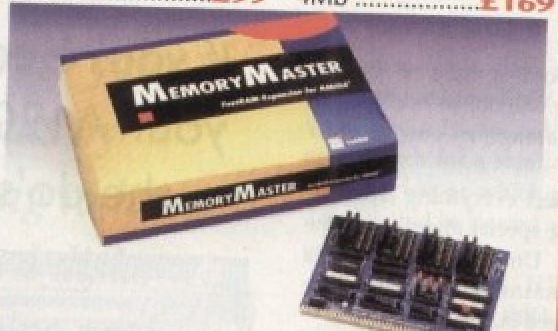
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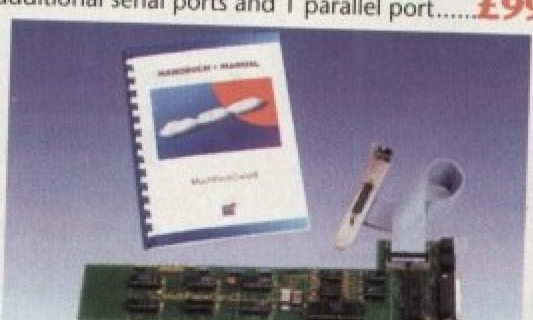



| | |
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Autoboot, Autoconfig and Zero wait states

## MULTIFACE CARD 3

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Most recent powerful applications for the Amiga (eg: for graphics, music, animation, raytracing, D.T.P.) require more main memory than is available or possible to integrate. GigaMem is a program which simulates up to 1 GigaByte memory, which swaps onto any mass storage system (i.e. hard disk). Intelligent management accomplishes simultaneous use of several programs in a multitasking mode.

**System requirements:-**
★ GigaMem works with all AMIGA <R> computers with MMU (Memory Management Unit): i.e. Amiga's with 68020 or 68030 accelerator and MMU.
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**SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:**
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★ Kickstart™ 3.0 or above.
★ Minimum 2Mb graphics memory.
★ Additional memory recommended.

## Repair service

New service centre/repair for most Amiga computers. We offer a quotation service of £10 for which we will examine your computer and report back with an exact quotation price for the repair. If the repair is carried out the £10 is then deducted from your bill.

# HOW 2 fit an A1200

## If you're contemplating a hard disk for your A1200, read on as *AC* points out the do's and don'ts of installation

## Before you buy...

Before you rush out, cash in hand, there are a few basic points you should consider:

***Is there are major difference between the various models on the market?***
Although some appear faster than others during benchmark tests the actual speed difference is minute during normal operations.

***What size drive should I get?***
Probably the best way to decide on a size is to add up all the software you'd like to install and then pick the next size up from that – under no circumstances consider anything less than a 40Mb drive.

***Do I need anything else?***
Get a copy of HD-Backup or Quarterback Tools – which was given away with our December issue. In addition invest in some form of directory manager such as SID II or Directory Opus – good file management is an essential part of owning any hard disk.

***Which type of hard disk do I need?***
In the case of an Amiga 1200 you'll require a 2.5in IDE drive which has been approved for use with the machine.

If up until now your computing career has been spent on a floppy-based system, the appeal of a hard disk may not be that great. After all what's the big deal, so they're faster and a bit more convenient than a floppy – hardly worth spending hundreds of pounds on, right?

Wrong. After just a few minutes exposure to a hard disk you'll grimace at the prospect of rebooting with a floppy. The difference is akin to that between walking and driving a car – with the relatively large investment being outweighed by vastly improved performance right across the board.

Before you start unscrewing your A1200 please bear in mind that if your machine is still within its warranty it will be invalidated by adding a hard disk under your own steam.

As a consequence, the following procedure is best attempted on machines which are over a year old. This isn't to say the process is difficult, in fact the A1200 is probably the easiest of all the Amiga range to upgrade.

However, if a Commodore engineer spots that a new machine has been opened for whatever reason you'll be out in the cold – end of story. Even if the problem has nothing to do the installation of the hard disk the end result will remain the same, and you'll be forced to pay for any subsequent repairs.

Now before wielding a screwdriver please read the following instructions very carefully and do not proceed unless you're completely sure of what you're doing. At this point it must be stressed *Amiga Computing* will not be held reasonable for any damage to you or your machine.

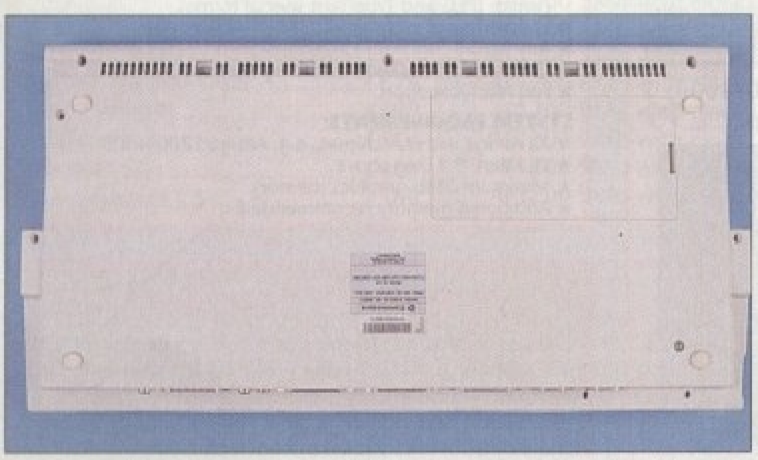
First disconnect everything from the machine, paying special attention to the power supply. Under circumstances attempt any maintenance while the machine is plugged in.

Now flip the machine over and undo the screws which hold the casing together, then slice open the warranty seals – there's no going back now.... Hold the machine together and carefully turn the machine right-side up.

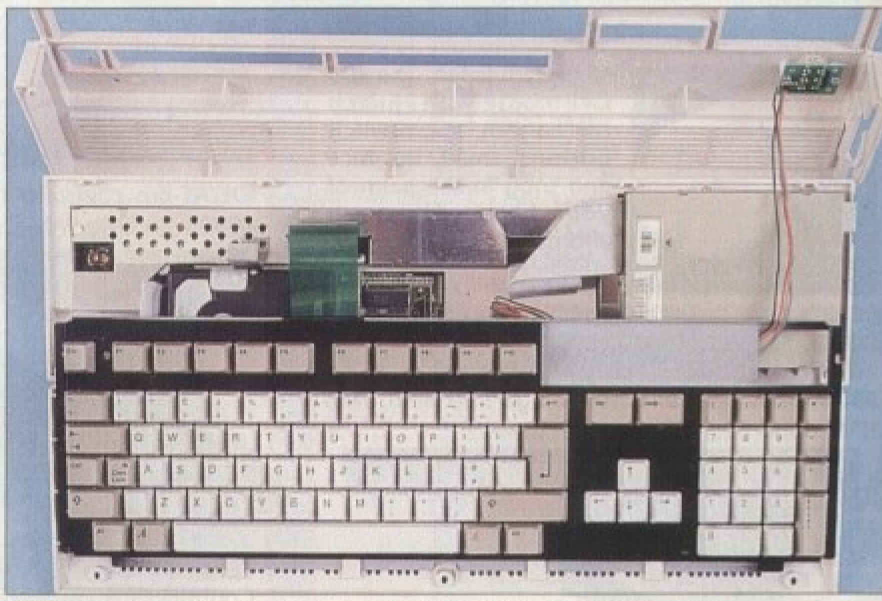
You should now be able to remove the lid revealing the hard drive cradle within. You may notice that the top of the casing presses against the casing – this is normal and is done to keep the drive from sliding around inside the machine.

At this point go the kitchen, make a coffee and return to the table with; the coffee, a small crosshead screwdriver and one IDE drive – complete with connecting cable.

The coffee is to calm your nerves – feel free to increase the dose as necessary. Now please be careful and take your time to follow these instructions to the letter:



***Step 1: remove the screws and open the casing***



***Step two: carefully release the ribbon connector and remove the keyboard***

- Disconnect the disk drive LEDs.

- Slide the keyboard back and free from its catches, placing it behind the body of the machine. If necessary you can disconnect the keyboard ribbon cable from the motherboard – but be sure to remember its original position and alignment.

- Now fit the drive into the cradle – it can be temporarily removed from the machine if required.

- Connect the cable to the drive and replace the cradle and drive combination into the machine – connecting the aforementioned cable to the interface on the motherboard of the machine.

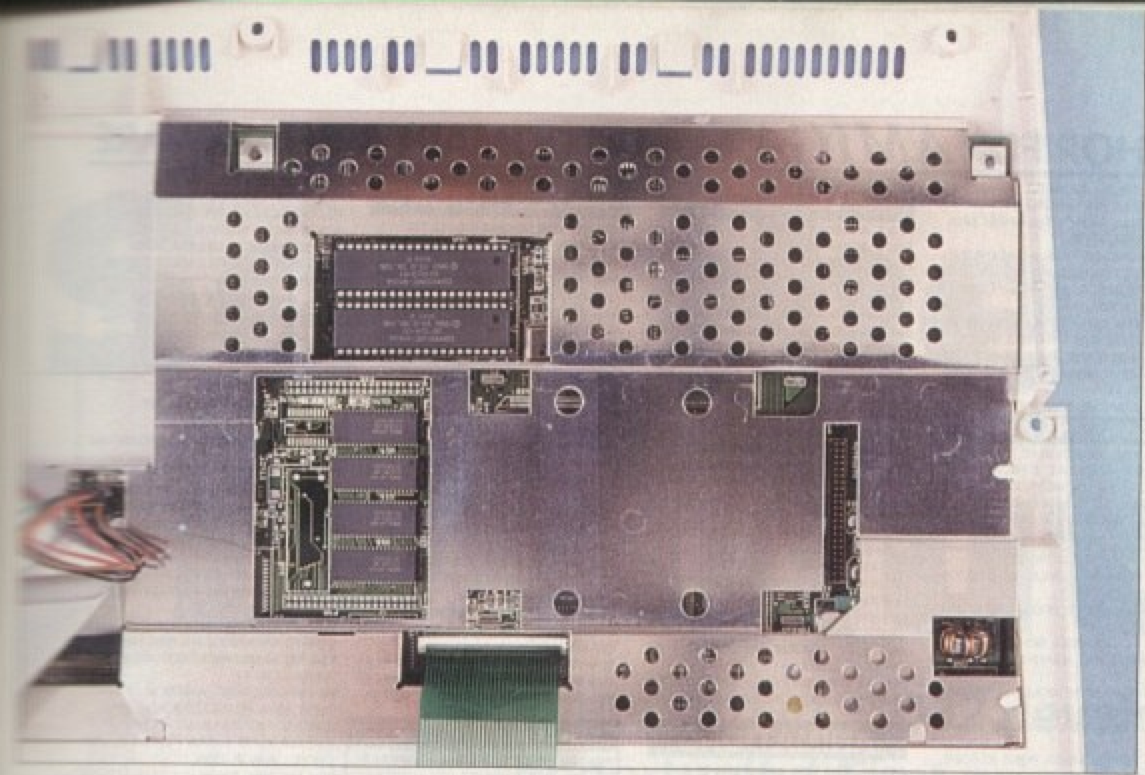
- Now simply replace the keyboard and reassemble the machine.

Believe it or not the physical installation is now complete, it's literally that simple. Now it's time to move on to the preparation and partitioning of the drive.

If you're not familiar with hard disks partitioning the process can be a rather confusing. However in reality it's a fairly straightforward procedure which simple slices the disk into several user defined portions.

You may well ask why bother? Well there are some advantages involved in partitioning. Firstly you can impress your friends by pretending to have more hard disks than you've actually got!

But perhaps more import is the safety



Step three: locate the hard drive cradle, take it out, and bolt the hard drive to it using the bolts which your dealer should have supplied. Remember to treat the drive unit with care

# hard drive

aspect. If the unthinkable happens and your hard disk crashes, a partitioned drive will only lose the data from one of its component partitions.

As a result you'll only need to format/recover/re-install one section of the drive. In addition smaller partitions are read faster, so it's possible you could notice a slight reduction in access time – however it's pretty unlikely.

On the down side, heavily partitioned drives can be a real pain to maintain. In the early days lots of partitions can seem a great idea but when space starts to become tight you could rue the day you went mad with partitioning software.

Suddenly even relatively small files won't fit onto the drive – even though there may be lots of space left when all the free partition space is added together.

## AMAZING

A particularly painful mistake is to make DH0: – otherwise known as the system disk – too small. If this happens it's amazing how soon you'll face requesters which read cannot copy fonts, libraries or in fact anything else that newly installed software has a habit of adding to DH0.

At this point there's no alternative but to start moving vital directories around you system, using the Assign command to bring order to the partitioning madness you've created.

In short, don't be tempted to over partition and never make your system disk too small. On a 40Mb drive make the DH0: partition at least 10Mb.

Assuming the machine is firmly screwed together – complete with mouse, monitors and all other essential peripherals – it's time to reboot the machine using either the HDToolbox disk or the *Amiga Computing* December CoverDisk featuring RDPrep. Given the

> *impress your friends by pretending to have more hard disks than you've got!*

choice opt for the RDPrep software give away as this is by far the simplest method of prepping a drive.

First boot the CoverDisk and run the RDPrep software – take a look at the disk pages and readme file if you're a bit nervous. The software will now automatically search for a standard Commodore SCSI device, at which point your new drive should be located and its name pop up.

Although both HDToolbox and RDPrep apparently think your new drive is a SCSI, in fact it's just pretending to be so, to make life simpler for itself and mildly confusing for you.

Anyway, leaving the idiosyncrasies of the installers aside the drive should be spotted and will appear in the RDPrep screen. Now simply select it and click on the button marked Screen 2 Partitioning.

At this point define the size of your partitions and return to screen 1. Now write the Rigid Disk Block and save a copy of the mountfile prior to quitting the package. Your new hard disk will appear on the Workbench screen as something like DH0:NDOS, DH1:NDOS and so on...

This simply means that the drive is on-line but as yet not formatted. To format the drive click once on its disk icon and select format from the pull-down menu.

The usual requester will now appear for naming the drive and selecting whether or not to have a Trashcan. Before clicking on format ensure that Fast File System is activated. Simply repeat this process for each partition on your system

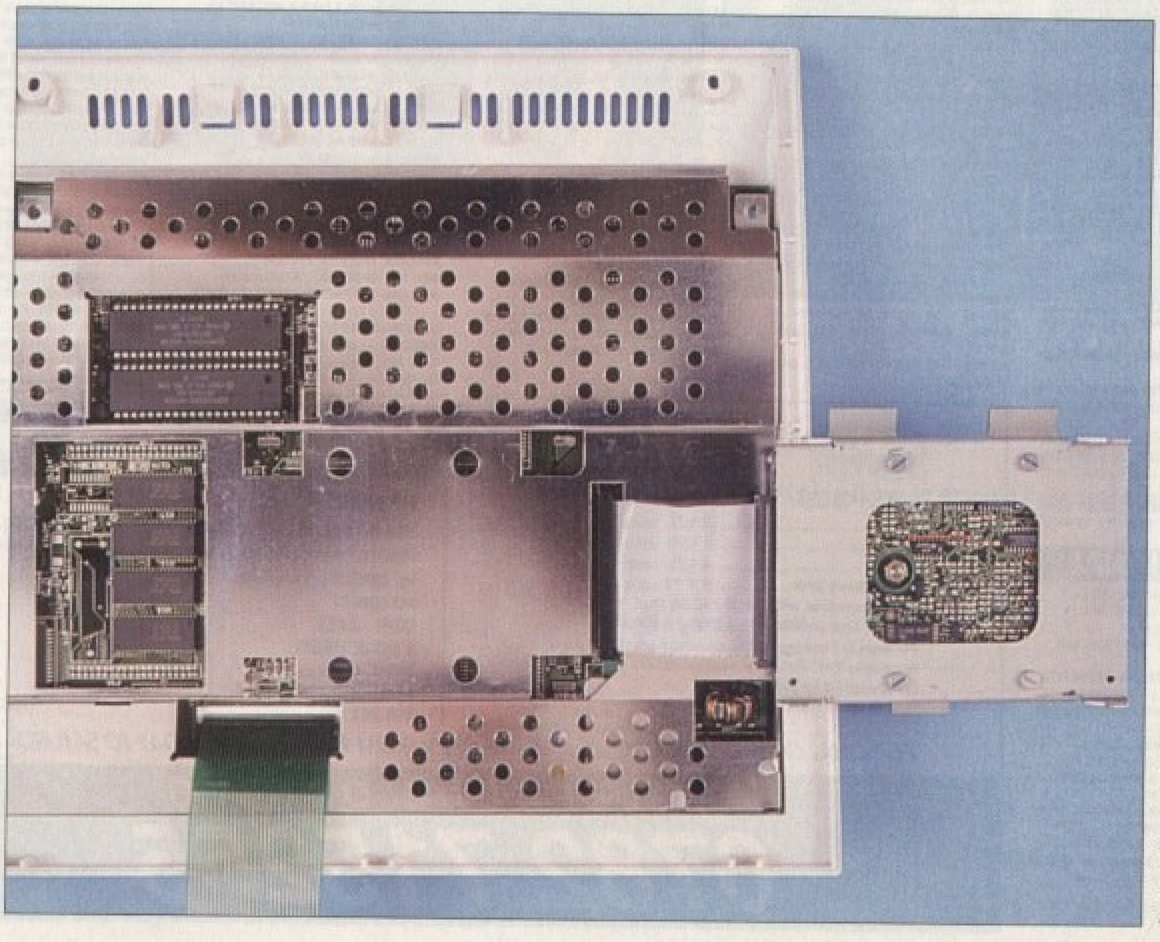
At this point you'll be happy to know the process is almost complete – all that remains is to copy Workbench onto the drive.

To do this, reboot the machine using a copy of your original Workbench disk and copying all the necessary files to your system partition. To do this open a Shell window and type in the following line:

```
copy df0:#? [drive name:] all clone
```

Now simply repeat the process for each disk supplied with the machine and all will be installed. After you've done this for each disk make sure that df0: is empty and warm re-boot the machine. If all is well your machine will now boot-up from the hard disk and you're in business. Have fun...

AC



Step four: connect the drive ribbon cable and re-seat the cradle, then screw down the casing and boot with your prepping software

# See the CD32 revolution!

**10 runners up prizes**

## Interested in CD32 development? Well here's a great opportunity! First prize in our Christmas competition is a guided tour around the Psygnosis CD32 development centre in London

We'll take the lucky first prize winner to Psygnosis' plush Kings Cross offices, birthplace of CD32 Microcosm, for a super guided tour.

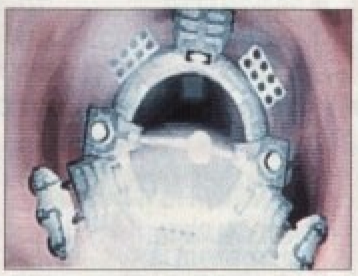
You'll see complex computer models on Silicon Graphics workstations, the original Microcosm on the Japanese FM Towns CD games system, and some of the exciting projects now under development. You'll meet Mike Simpson, Microcosm Project Manager and Stuart Sairgason, one of Britain's top programmers and the rest of the Microcosm team.

The ten runners up will all be able to sport some rather fashionable and exclusive Microcosm T-shirts.

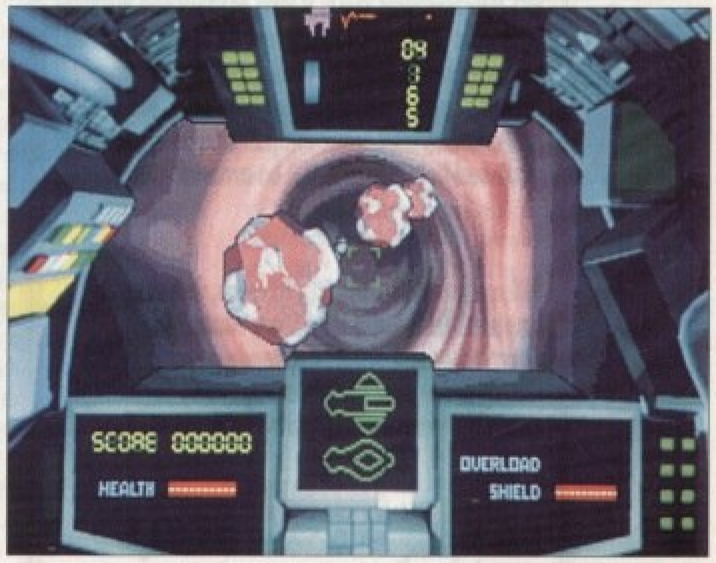
Psygnosis' new game, Microcosm, featuring 256 colours, has some of the most awesome graphics and stunning video sequences to hit the small screen. The story begins amid corporate war and sabotage when a miniaturised brain-manipulation droid is implanted in the President of the Cybertech corporation. Unfortunately for him it all goes horribly wrong. The story follows the droid's progress in a world unlike any other, involving exploration of six areas of the President's body.

Any of these prizes could be yours. All you need to do is complete the entry form and pop it in the post.










## STAKING YOUR CLAIM

Send this form to:Microcosm Compo, Amiga Computing Europa House, Adlington Park , Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

*Answer these simple questions:*

**1. How many colours are there in Microcosm?**

a. 151 ❒
b. 184 ❒
c. 256 ❒

**2. What is implanted in Cybertech's president?**

a. A miniature psycho-botic implant ❒
b. A miniaturised brain-manipulation droid ❒
c. A miniature brainless manoeuvrable probe ❒

**3. How many areas of the body are there to explore in Microcosm?**

a. Three ❒
b. Five ❒
c. Six ❒

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss) __________

Address __________

Postcode __________ Daytime Phone __________

❒ *Tick this box if you not wish to receive promotional material from other companies.*

Cosing date is January 5, 1994. The prize winner will be drawn from all the correct entries received and will be informed in writing within two months of the closing date. Result information may be obtained by writing to our offices. No cash alternative to the prize is available. The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

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Competition closes on December 20, 1993. No cash alternative to the prizes can be given. Winners will be drawn from all correct entries and prizes sent out within 60 days of the closing date. Judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

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# Marriage wrecker

## Star Letter

This letter is probably a bit more unusual than the others you receive. I would like to warn people out there that computing can wreck lives.

I've been married for three and a half years to a wonderful lady, and we have two great kids. My addiction to programming and games playing has helped me to lose all that.

Although the time spent on my computer went quickly for me, it dragged for my wife and the computer got all the attention.

Now I must sell it and I hate the sight of it. I have lost all the things in life that I love. I'm hoping you will print this because I know there are many people out there who are on their way to losing loved ones in the same way.

If, because of this letter, people can recognise their addiction before it's too late, then my marriage may have had some purpose. Thanks for listening.

*Richard Dean, Slough*

*An addictive or compulsive attitude to computers is more common than many would like to believe, and, as your moving account shows, the problem isn't restricted to school-kids.*

*Pilot tests in schools have shown an almost 50 per cent addiction rate among those who play games regularly, so the danger of the problem becoming more acute cannot be understated.*

*I'm sure all our readers, particularly those with partners, will feel for you, as (if they're being honest) most will have suffered domestic strife of some sort caused by the urge to spend hours in front of a keyboard every evening. How many of these cases have resulted in such heartache is anyone's guess.*

*If any of our readers can be as open and courageous as you in sharing this problem with others, we'll be glad to give the matter a full airing through the ESP pages.*

# Ezra Surf's Postbag

# ESP

## Not so big bang

I disagree with some of the points made in the article "CD Big Bang" in the November issue.

Firstly you say you look forward to the time when games will no longer have "cheap looking tiny sprites", but massive digitised action sequences. I do not see this as in any way a step forward.

The fantastic artwork we see on some games now could be lost as artists are pushed out by anybody with a video recorder and a digitiser. This type of animation is currently used heavily in tedious and dull beat-'em-ups.

If digitising from video to game becomes the norm, does this mean we will never see a game which isn't first a film? Most of the classic games have nothing to do with film tie-ins (Populous, Civilisations, Chaos Engine, and so on).

Secondly, you say the advent of CD means that we can look forward to the game being bundled with film previews, tie-ins, 0898 competitions, special offers, and so on. Personally, I would be more than peeved to buy a CD to find out that 599Mb is used for advertising and only 1Mb for the game.

You may see this as far-fetched, but in these days of corporate take-overs is it ridiculous to one day see a Psygnosis CD game accompanied by loads of Sony advertising?

Adverts could be tacked on to the front of a game so you were forced to watch them. Where will it all end?

*"Congratulations, you have just finished level one. And now, a word from our sponsors... "*

Jeez! This is the stuff nightmares are made of. With some games aimed at younger audiences, the marketing bandwagon will see an opportunity to target these young minds with constant advertisements for the latest £100 trainers or whatever.

I do look forward to the advent of CD video, but what is the use of 74 minutes? Two episodes of Blackadder? Half a feature film? Of course a film could be provided on two CDs, but there would no doubt be a two CD price tag of £20 or more. Unless the price is right, Video CD will go the same way as Betamax.

*Paul Matthews, St Leonards on Sea*

*Your concerns are those shared by thousands of game-playing Amiga owners, but they will probably remain unfounded. The vast spaces available on CD-ROM discs offer artists more flexibility, not less.*

*For example, the Sony corporation recently bought more than 100 Silicon Graphics workstations which, we believe, will be used to produce original 3D rendered cartoons and intro scenes for games.*

*Many of the larger software houses, Ocean included, have followed suit, and the result of this huge increase in graphics throughput and the benefits of the CD medium will be even more stunning intros of the type for which Psygnosis are already famous.*

*If anything, this explosion in the amount of space available to artists will result in more leeway for graphical excellence rather than less. Check out the intro to the latest CD32 release of James Pond if you don't believe me.*

*As for advertisements which we are forced to watch through, can you imagine any company being so stupid as to force an unwilling audience to sit through three minutes of advertising?*

*We are already familiar with game intro screens proudly touting the name of the suppliers, and ten minutes of trailers on most rented videos, yet we don't complain about those and don't have to watch them if we don't want to.*

*The most probable outcome is that video-style ads will appear on CD32 discs for games to be released, but even so, most game players will welcome a chance to see the game in action rather than trust to a magazine review.*

*How many of us fast forward through the pre-movie trailers on a rented video until we spot a film we are interested in, then stop and play that particular trailer?*

*Your concerns about vast digitised games are shared by many, but we won't see games in this format for a while, and the games companies will never attempt to sell something which proves unpopular in any case.*

*Digitised sequences will be used as intros or cut scenes and are unlikely to appear as part of the interactive gameplay. Quite apart from anything else, digitised human action will lay a game open to the film classification regulations.*

*Again, worries that 600Mb of CD space will be taken up mostly by ads and such are likely to remain just worries. No matter how much graphical nonsense surrounds a game, the software houses know that a bad game, no matter how well packaged, is a waste of* ➤

## Game fix

In issue 63, J Farrar complained about Microprose B17 and Virgin's Shuttle not working on his GVP A530. I too experienced problems in running those programs from my A530.

The solution to this crisis was as simple as it was effective. Programs like these overrun the Amiga's operating system but seem unable to allocate the memory they need to run.

What I found out was that I should let the Amiga set aside the memory by stacking the program to at least 50 per cent more than the program size.

As an example, using icon information from Workbench shows that B17 is 320,000 bytes in size. Change the stack size from the default 4,096 to 480,000 bytes, save the setting, and that's it!

*Jon Hemfjell, Maze, Norway*

*Thanks, Jon. All tips aimed at helping readers with specific problems are gratefully received. All you sim buffs out there with accelerators and problems with your games now have another trick to try when getting them to run.*

*Of course, if the games companies programmed their games properly in the first place, we wouldn't have to print bug fixes, would we?*

resources. What is more likely is that good games will be further enhanced by the addition of cinematographic cut scenes, intros, outros, and so on.

If you think this prospect is a bad one, then you are a traditional gamer with a capital T and in a very small minority.

## Ezra Surf's Postbag

## Wrong end of the stick

I'm afraid you have vastly overrated the CD32. AGA makes no sense in a games machine today.

I was quite horrified to see Oscar running on it. All enemy objects stuttered along at 25 frames per second. This is not on! They were tiny! How is CD32 going to cope with large beat-'em-up characters? It can't compete with SNES or the Mega Drive if it can't move better quality images at the same rate – 50Hz.

AGA is a compromise, retaining bitplanes for backward compatibility, vital for a computer but not for a console. It needs new software! This was an opportunity to introduce a true step forward by switching to byte-per-pixel graphics.

This is the most elegant and efficient way of doing graphics. You get a big increase in flexibility once the units dealt with by processor and RAM are equated to the abstractions of graphics algorithms.

Forget endless bit-masking and shifting. This helps image processing, art packages, colour DTP, real time 3D game environments, and 2D sprite drawing.

CD32 has this planar chip, but it doesn't use DMA. Conversion will still take an entire video frame of precious processor time, so don't expect to see 3 D at high frame rates. I doubt it will match the speed of Mega CD's 3D hardware sprites as demonstrated in Thunderhawk.

The Amiga is supposedly a graphics machine, but it has a slow bitmap, and this is why it is dying. When will this be rectified with true DMA-to-video read-out? Can Commodore survive long enough, and aren't Amiga games now committed to the idea of running screen conversions?

*No name supplied*

*Answer number one: The Amiga is not dying. It is still the best selling home computer in Britain. End of false rumour.*

*Answer number two: How many misconceptions about the games industry can one cram into a single letter? True, the PC and consoles have certain advantages over the Amiga, but have you really looked at the games scene over the past year?*

*A healthy games industry is one in which good programmers can be found releasing games based upon original ideas, improving existing games, or just selling bucket-loads.*

*Diggers, Flashback, Hired Guns, and Syndicate, all of which originated on the Amiga, are ample testament to an industry which still has a large audience, lots of ideas, and plenty of development left in it.*

*Consoles can be discounted. They are a fine form of entertainment, but the only games available for them betray their incredible dependence on the very young games playing population, and the games available are of a very uniform caste.*

*As for your assertion that the Amiga cannot offer beat-'em-ups to rival the Mega Drive, can I just mention Body Blows and invite you to compare it to Street Fighter 2?*

*Keep an eye on Body Blows 2, soon to appear as a special version for the CD32, then tell me how slow Amiga games are. You slag off Oscar for its "slow" 25 frames per second movement, but by comparing this to 50Hz, a screen refresh speed rather than a pixel movement speed, you confuse the issue.*

*Oscar is as smooth, if not smoother than, the majority of console games, costs less, and uses more colours on screen. As this is the first platform game of its kind on CD32 format, we can only expect the genre to improve rapidly.*

*You also seem far too willing to put down CD32's ability to convert and use byte-per-pixel graphics and use them in a smooth game-playing environment.*

*The software houses who actually make rather than talk about the games we play have universally welcomed the planar chip, and until we see a game which utilises this sort of PC-to-Amiga graphics conversion, it would be churlish and over-cynical to doubt its potential.*

*Yes, in today's game-playing world, the Amiga's bitplane graphics have certain historical disadvantages, but had Commodore released a machine with absolutely no compatibility with existing software, we would have received thousands of letters of complaint.*

*Far better, don't you agree, to offer the best of both worlds by retaining compatibility yet making it easier to software houses to use PC graphics?*

*Finally, to hold up MegaCD as a standard by which any games machine can be judged is ludicrous. MegaCD has been slated by the most important people in the games industry, the buying public, who have taken one good look and left it well alone.*

*With its dated 16-bit graphics, high price tag, lousy sound, and two year old game scenarios, MegaCD is about as likely to survive as a badly wounded turkey in a Butch Cassidy-style shoot-out on Christmas Eve.*

*It would be silly to predict that CD32 is going to sell a million units in its first year, but by the same token it would be foolish and cynical to deny Commodore's exciting new machine a few months to prove itself.*

**Got something to say through the pages of AC? Ezra Surf is our mailman, dedicated to reading your letters and selecting the most interesting for publication. Drop him a line at:**

**Ezra Surf's Postbag , Amiga Computing Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP**

**Please don't enclose saes as Ezra just hasn't got enough paper to reply personally. He might also have to shorten your letters, so don't be offended if you end up getting the chop**

## Light fingers

It's not very often I resort to your pages, but I feel I must protest in this case. We are all familiar with software piracy and other types of computer crime, but every month when I pop down to my newsagent I see another type of crime being committed.

I am talking about the stealing of magazine CoverDisks. How many times have you seen your favourite magazine on the shelf without a disk? This type of behaviour is simply not acceptable in a community where people have enough problems *à la* piracy.

Not only does this crime put potential readers off from buying the magazine, but it also gives the shop owner a good reason for not stocking it. I have now placed an order at my newsagent to save me galavanting around town looking for a copy.

Finally, can you reprint the address you gave for a supplier of Bengali fonts a while back?

*Abdul, Hailsham*

*We're as annoyed as you are that people pilfer CoverDisks from magazines while they're on the shelf, but there's not much we can do about it.*

*The only solution would be to shrink-wrap the whole magazine with the disk in the middle, but as this would stop readers from carrying out the essential Saturday morning browse it is a step we do not want to take.*

*If you get your local newsagent to stock the magazine, you can guarantee it will be either below or behind the counter where prospective thieves can't reach it. Big high street newsagents are great for range of choice and convenience, but it is this sort of store which is most prone to disk-nickers.*

*The company we quoted as a supplier of Bengali fonts has since gone very quiet and we no longer know if it is still in business, so here's an Ezra plea: can someone please let us know of a reliable supplier of scalable ethnic typefaces? There's an expectant market out there!*

## Extra drives

**Having just purchased a second drive for my trusty A500, I was alarmed to find that one of my best games, Zool, did not support it!**

**I feel that hard drive support is an optional bonus, since hard drives are relatively new to the Amiga as standard, but many users have had extra drives since way back.**

**Companies should support at least extra floppy drives! Come on, people, let's get with the program.**

***John Gibbs, Yanbu, Saudi Arabia***

***We are in complete agreement. Since about 1989, AC has considered its average reader to be someone with an A500, probably expanded to 1Mb, with an extra floppy drive.***

***Lately, with the resurgence in hard drive popularity and 2Mb Amigas, that theoretical average equipment level has risen, but a games company releasing a game in 1993 which doesn't recognise a three year-old standard is doing us no favours.***

## Pet hate

I hate hard drives, or at least the unstable variety.

Three days ago, I was near the end of a 50,000 word story when my hard drive, after two years of faithful service, popped its clogs, shuffled off this mortal coil, and generally expired.

Repeated attempts at resuscitation through the good offices of DiskSalv retrieved some files and data, but the majority were lost and after six hours of armed struggle I was forced to raise the white flag and format the bastard.

All I have left of my 50,000 words are a few pages of print out (barely 5,000 words' worth), and an early file of the first chapter.

As I said, I curse all hard drives to the ninth circle of hell and back. OK, so I should have backed the damn thing up, but last time I did that using Quarterback 4.0, the eighth floppy in a series of over thirty developed a read/write error, thus rendering the backup useless.

Aaaaaargh!

*Mr Excruciatingly Angry, Bournemouth*

## Club corner

**This month's club is the North Wales Computer Club, who celebrate their birthday soon at a third annual open day to be held at the YMCA, Queens Drive, Colwyn Bay on November 13. Attractions will include trade stands, software demonstrations, and hardware displays.**

**In a rare and much needed display of computing for the less fortunate, a Special Needs User Group stand will be offering help on how this area of computing can be aided.**

**Further details are available from Bob Lang on 0492 530594.**

... 32-bit Acorn home computers ...... Commodore Amiga ...... IBM PC /compatibles ...

# SPECIAL XMAS OFFER

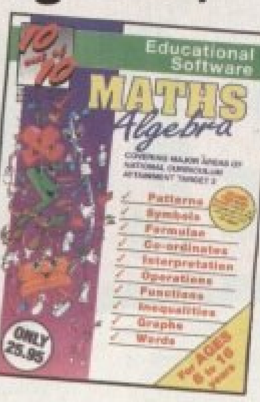
TEN OUT OF TEN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

## Buy any two titles and SAVE £15!

## Maths (Algebra)

*For children 6 to 16 years*

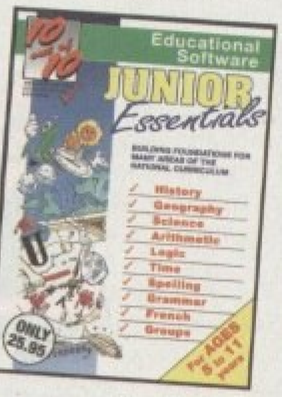
Covering many areas from Attainment Target 3 of the National Curriculum, the *10 out of 10* Maths (Algebra) package is packed with subjects, levels and activities to challenge all children from Key Stage 1 right up to Key Stage 4.
Following sequences, interpreting graphs, solving equations and numerous other algebraic skills have never before been so much fun. This is the fun way to practise and become fast and proficient with the manipulations needed for high examination marks.




## Junior Essentials¤

*For children 5 to 11 years*

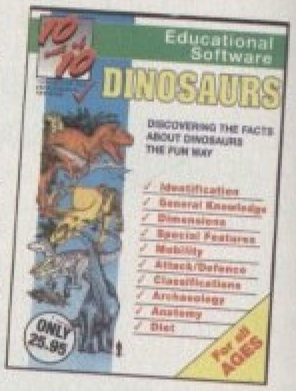
A truly flexible package covering many topics essential for building a good educational foundation. The areas covered have been carefully chosen by a team of experts and come from several subjects and levels of the National Curriculum.
The child's progress in these areas is constantly monitored and recorded and parents or teachers can easily discover where a child needs help. As with all the *10 out of 10* series, further motivation to play the games and learn more is added in the form of High Score Tables.




## Dinosaurs

*For all ages*

This package is the fun way to learn the truth about dinosaurs. The six games all have superb digitised graphics to make a whole area of history – dinosaurs – come alive. If you came face to face with a tyrannosaurus would you run away? Or are you safe because it's a vegetarian and wouldn't eat you? This, together with 100s of other interesting facts, can be discovered from this enthralling package. The six games – all with single and multi-player options – are educational fun for everyone.




## Maths (Number)

*For children 6 to 16 years*

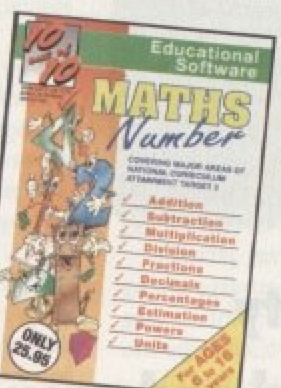
"Well thought out to offer real benefits to children studying in British schools."
*– PC Plus (July '93)*

"Educationally worthwhile and exciting to play – a rare combination."
*– Archimedes World (December '92).*

"Unique in home-based programs because of the National Curriculum link."
*– The Micro User (September '92)*

"Excellent for reinforcing specific mathematics knowledge."
*– Junior Education (July '93)*

"The 10 out of 10 Series lives up to its name." *– PC Home (August '93)*

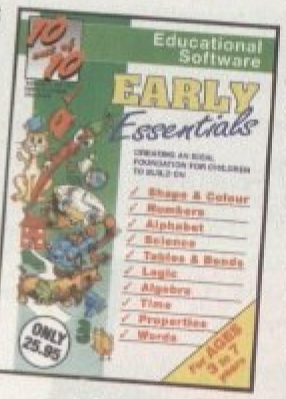



## Early Essentials

*For children under 7 years*

"Outstanding. All of the activities are not only very enjoyable but they're well thought through. It's one of the best multi-purpose infant packages I've seen in a long while. If you have young kids get it for the home. If you're a teacher, hammer on the headteacher's door and beg for money to buy a copy."
*– Archimedes World (July '93)*

"At just £2595 you'll be hard pressed to find anything which even comes close to Early Essentials."
*– Micro Computer Mart (Sept. '93)*




## English

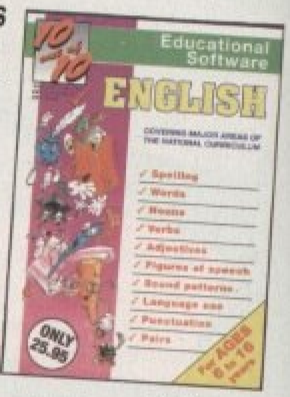
*For children 6 to 16 years*

"Everything being done is relevant to the player's education. An invaluable curriculum experience, plenty of fun, lots of variety."
*– PC Home (November '93)*

"Guaranteed to sustain the attention of even reluctant learners."
*– RISC User (January/February '93)*

"Most importantly, as the games are fun, children can't help but learn."
*– Acorn Computing (March '93)*

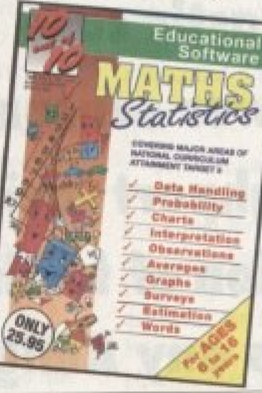
"Allows progression from Junior school age right up to GCSE level."
*– Amiga User International (Sept. '93)*




## Maths (Statistics)¤

*For children 6 to 16 years*

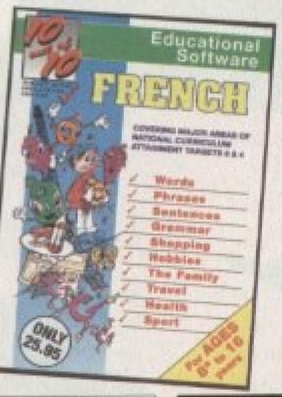
Attainment Target 5 of the National Curriculum is Data Handling – a vital area of Mathematics. *10 out of 10* Maths (Statistics) covers 36 specific topics from that subject.
In this package, recording animal sightings in an animated pond or rolling dice are just two of the many challenges that children will relish as they learn about statistics. And can graph drawing be a game? It becomes arcade action as bricks and bombs are dropped onto the charts. This is a really enjoyable way to learn about statistics.




## French¤

*For children 6 to 16 years*

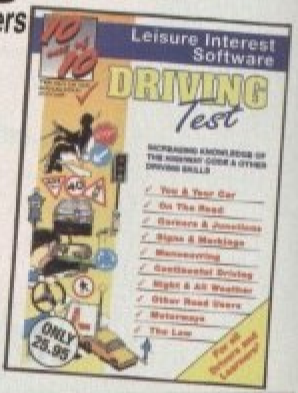
This suite of six educational games will give fun and motivation to all children learning French. The package is designed with the Modern Languages National Curriculum firmly in mind and contains many challenges to reinforce facts stated in Attainment Targets 3 and 4.
*10 out of 10* French is essential for children on Key stages 3 and 4, but the numerous parent and teacher customisation options make the software suitable for all children – however young – who are learning the French language.




## Driving Test¤

*For all drivers and learners*

Whether you're a novice learner or an advanced expert, there's plenty you can learn from this package. There are thousands of built-in questions and you can choose whether you want to answer them directly or add to the fun by trying them within games.
The six games have been designed to be fun for all adults and include strategy, mental agility, coordination and more. And, if you think you are up to it, you can "*take the test*" – a challenge covering many areas of the Driving Test.




## The INNOVATIVE *10 out of 10* Series

***These highly acclaimed suites of programs are a revolutionary step forward in educational software. They ALL use a unique system of automatically recording children's progress as they play and learn. This is just one of the many features which sets the 10 out of 10 Series in a class of its own.***

Each package contains **SIX** expertly designed educational games **covering TEN essential areas** of a child's education. All packages cover a **wide age range** and subjects are available for all children from three to sixteen years of age.
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## The *10 out of 10* Series is available from all good computer software suppliers

# Glossy graphics

## Prepare to drool as Paul Austin provides an exclusive look at the latest in colour printing technology

For the occasional high quality graphics project, it makes sense to send your creations to a print bureau (such as Alternative Image – 0533 440041) for output onto 35mm transparencies.

Unfortunately, although by far the best quality method, it's also the most costly, especially for limited numbers – and worse still, the turn-around can often be up to a week.

In the past the only alternative was to opt for a 24-pin printer or a deskjet capable of colour output. Unfortunately although fine for graphs, charts and colour text, such printers invariably fall short when it comes to photo-realism.

What was required for the hordes of Amiga artists was a dedicated high quality graphics printer, and with the arrival of the new Fargo Primera, the long wait is finally over.



*Primera's output is good enough for presentation portraits and glossy colour print-outs from Amiga packages*




Considering the quality of the Primera's output, the printer itself is unbelievably small. To give you an idea, close the mag, place it on a table and add maybe an inch all-round and you're there.

Allow a little space for twin feed and paper trays and you've got not only one of the most compact but arguably the most attractive – not to mention powerful – printers on the market.

As for the set-up, life couldn't be much simpler with a standard RS232 cable to the Amiga, a power supply, the cartridge and paper trays – all done in a couple of minutes.

Although easy to install, the ink cartridge is certainly unusual consisting of what appear to be twin kitchen rolls, linked by a continuous wax-based ink ribbon.

Although this sounds a potentially messy system, the printer employs a heat transfer method which means the ribbon is dry to the touch. Even stranger than dry ink is the application of colour – which in many ways is more akin to scanning than normal printing. In order to produce full colour image the Primera will make up to four passes over the specially treated A4 thermal transfer paper or transparency film.

In order to achieve this the four colours – cyan, magenta, yellow and black – are laid line-astern wrapping around the source roller connecting as a constant sheet to the take-up roller.

### SPOOLS

To load the printer you simply place the source and take-up spools into position on the removable cartridge, which then drops directly into a large bay area which dominates the middle of the printer.

For those planning to alternate between colour and mono ribbons Fargo will supply a spare cartridge, so swapping formats will simply mean popping the lid, removing and replacing with the spare.

Assuming your paper is loaded and the printer is powered and on-line, you're ready to print. As for the two examples, ADPro/TruePrint 24 was used for the portrait while Final Copy provided the spoof proof of Miss Pfieffer.

However it must be stressed neither of the two packages are essential, as any program capable of using preferences can take advantage of the Primera thanks to a custom driver which comes as part of the package.

Although compressing an image from A4 to the size you see invariably improves the overall look, the full scale output is easily the best colour hard copy yet available for the Amiga.

The question is: How much are you willing to invest to enjoy the glossy output it provides? First there's the cost of the printer itself, add the ribbons and of course the special paper or transparency film and the Primera falls squarely into the pro market.

At present the Primera is limited to 203dpi with its existing Amiga driver. However a photo-realistic kit is already available for the Mac and PC which quite literally does as its name suggests.

Unfortunately the Amiga driver is still in development, but rest assured as soon as the Amiga version arrives it will be thoroughly tested in *Amiga Update*.

As you may have noticed, I'm very impressed by the Primera. The output is excellent and reasonably quick at around two minutes a page, and the registration of the component colours is again excellent. My only concern is that this could degrade with prolonged use.

In short, for those who don't actually make money from their artistic exploits the Primera is just a tad too expensive. Having said that, if you can envisage recouping your investment in the form of T-shirts, projector slides or framed 24-bits, the Primera is the latest "must have" dream machine for any Amiga artisan.

### Consumables rundown

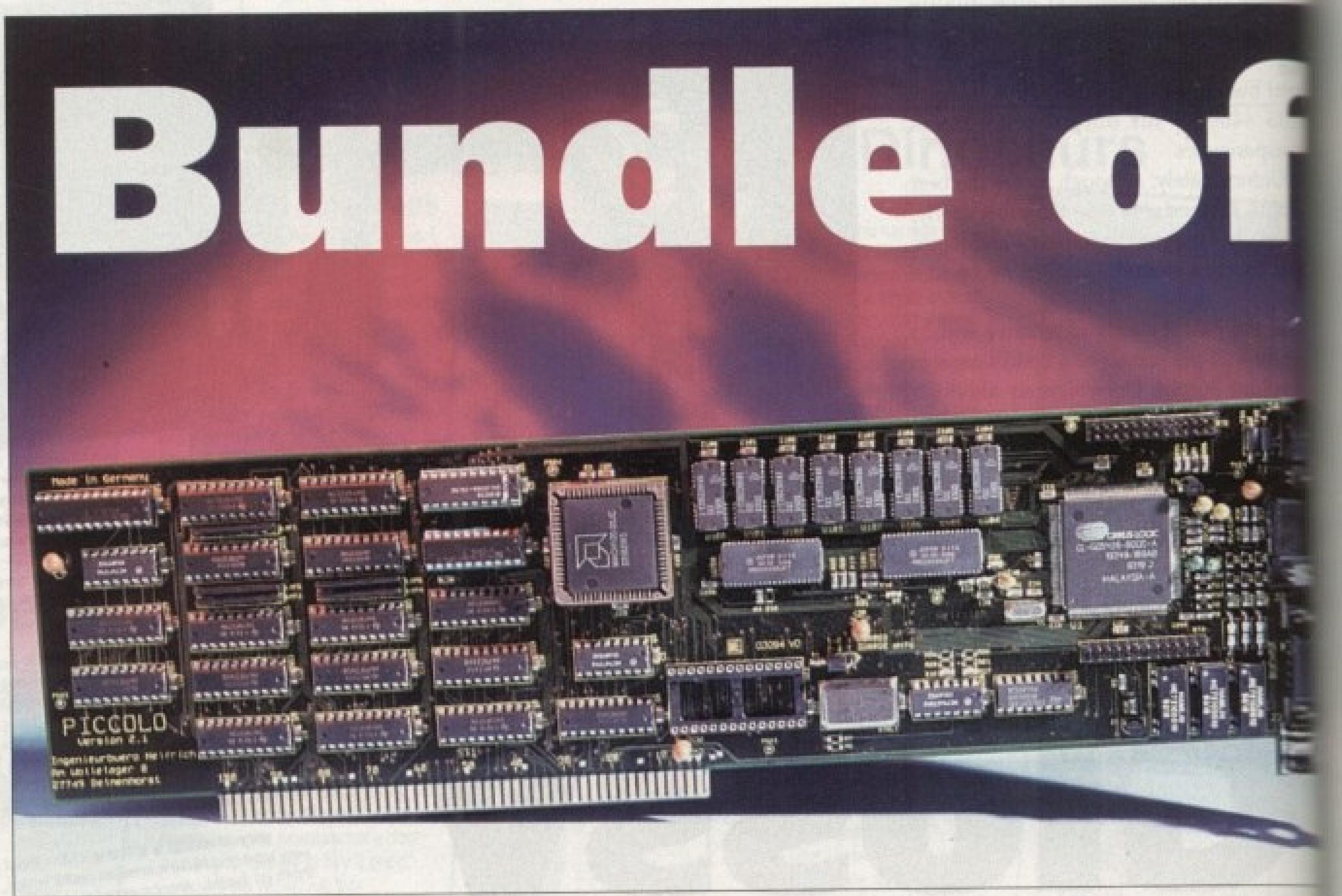
| | |
|---|---|
| CMY colour ribbon providing 115 prints | £45 |
| CMYK colour ribbon providing 80 prints | £45 |
| Mono ribbon providing 400 prints | £40 |
| Paper: per 200 sheets | £15 |
| Transparency: per 50 sheets | £35 |
| Photo-realistic upgrade kit | £249 |

● *Thirty-print CMY colour ribbon plus 25 sheets thermal and five sheets of transparency film come as part of the package.*

**Product: Primera colour printer**
**Supplier: Power Computing**
**Phone: 0234 843388**
**Price: £1,051.62**

**Implementation: 10**
**Easy of use: 10**
**Value for money: 7**
**Overall: 9**

# Bundle of




## The Piccolo 24-bit graphics card offers good hardware and a great software collection, as Stevie Kennedy found out

It seems that everywhere you turn thes edays a new low cost 24-bit card is popping out of the hot little oven of graphics development. As professional users demand a better true 24-bit display from their machines and find that AGA does not meet all their needs, a succession of manufacturers have attempted to fill the gap with cheap cards that do just about anything.

Piccolo is the latest to boast retargetable graphics (RTG), Workbench emulation, and a bundled paint package, but this time there's a bit more to the act. Among other things, Piccolo offers its own on-board blitter, and the software supplied free with the package is superb.

Sitting on a Zorro card, Piccolo will automatically sense whether it is in a Zorro II (A1500/2000) or Zorro III (A3000/4000) slot and change its mode of operation accordingly, so it is compatible with any of the larger Amigas and works well with all of them. In what is fast becoming a standard display technique, video signals are fed from the Amiga to the board, then passed on to the monitor.

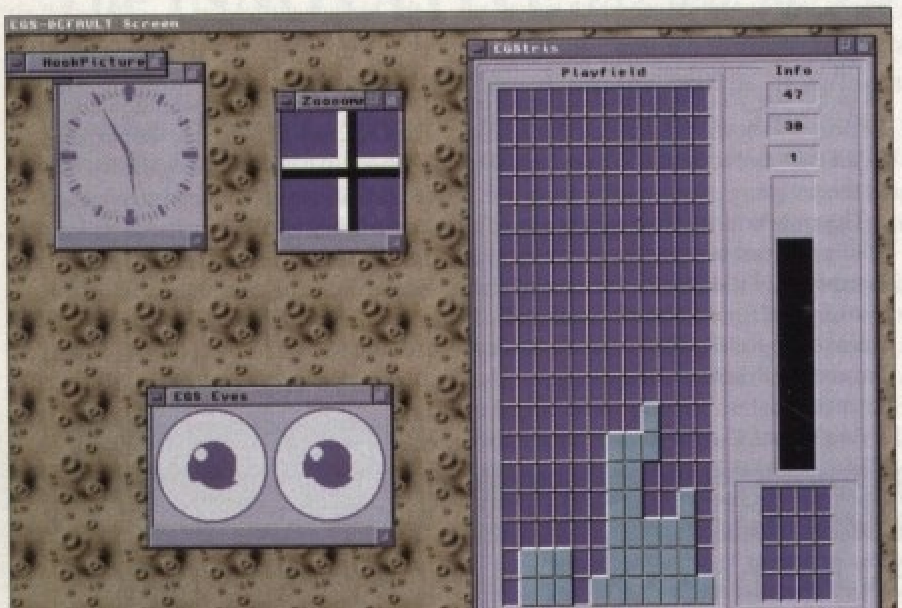
This method allows for a simple pass-through when the board is not being used and makes possible a pain-free single monitor set-up. In addition, though, it has the much more pleasing result of making the board transparent to the user, and after only half an hour one could be forgiven for forgetting there was a card in there at all.

Software is supplied on four disks and includes a wealth of high quality material. The EGS libraries and utilities form the main system software and enable Piccolo to function, and two paint packages top off the bill. Installation is painless, and the novice should find little to worry about.

My only concern here is with the EGS libraries. These are crucial to the operation of any board which uses them for RTG or intuition support, and having encountered them several times over the past couple of months, I've been less than impressed on occasion with their reliability. Viona Development bug-fix and upgrade the libraries constantly, and the latest release is much more stable than the first software we saw at *AC*, but there are still problems. On installation, EGS refused to function on the A1500, but when Piccolo and its software were transferred to the A4000 everything worked fine.

### PROMISING

Inconsistencies of this kind are a bane and exactly the sort of thing to kill a piece of hardware or software before it has a chance to develop. If this happened to EGS it would be a great pity, because EGS not only promises compatibility across a number of graphics cards, but a smooth and pleasurable working environment.




*EGS provides a default work environment and a few hacks*

Apart from the initial hiccup with the A1500, Piccolo's software was stable during most of the test with the exception of Workbench emulation, which will have to be worked on. Many programs refused to work under EGS, and some even caused a crash.

In particular, the retargeting utility found problems with packages which open more than one screen at the same time under different resolutions.

ADPro and ImageFX were prime offenders, the former bombing out when a preview screen such as Crop Visual was opened, the latter flipping out at startup.

Piccolo loaders and savers are available for both these packages, so the problem can be circumvented, and there are libraries for use with Real3D and Imagemaster.

However, EGS still doesn't have Workbench emulation good enough to match that offered by Retina or Picasso, and the retargeting utility does not offer control over refresh modes.

Although a last ditch method to coax unco-operative programs into life on an RTG card, editing the way the board displays each program individually is the only way to sort out glitches such as those which afflict Imagine when running under both Picasso and Piccolo.

Both cards will redirect Imagine to the 24-bit display where things move along a little faster and smoother, but when moving an object on-screen, a trail of orange lines is left behind or a wave of corru- tion makes it difficult to see what's goin on in detail. The program is still usable and redrawing the screen using Amiga-R forces a refresh to get rid of the corrup- tion, but it comes back with every sub-

### TV star

The second paint program bundled with Piccolo is the EGS version of TVPaint jr, a tried and tested package with a name for reliability and power. The junior version is not so much a cut down TVPaint as an older version without the advanced features found in TVPaint 2.

Most surprising of all, considering that this is supposed to be a budget or bundled version, is that the alpha channel works perfectly. This is one of TVPaint's most useful and powerful features, and provides a 256-level linear keying process between two images using a greyscale mask.

Using the alpha channel, images can be made to fade in and out gradually as the transparency of the mask changes with the greyscale used, and entire spare pages can be turned into an alpha channel for superb image compositing results.

Most of the original TV Paint's fe

# joy

…operation.

Retina, who's software and emulation seems more stable than any at the moment, doesn't have this problem, and the other RTG cards could take a lesson or two from its willingness to give users the power to edit individual screens.

Despite reservations about the current state of EGS, which should improve as the libraries are updated, when it works it is a joy to use. Viona Development are compiling a new release of the libraries as I type and boards distributed from now on should have the improved software. Nothing illustrates better the potential of EGS than the bundled paint package, PicoPainter.

Running from a Workbench icon and opening on the Piccolo's display, Painter



*The potential for EGS is adequately demonstrated by PicoPainter*

is an EGS package from the ground up, using all EGS gadget boxes, intuition drivers, and screen modes. It is therefore very stable and benefits from the advantages of the EGS way of working.

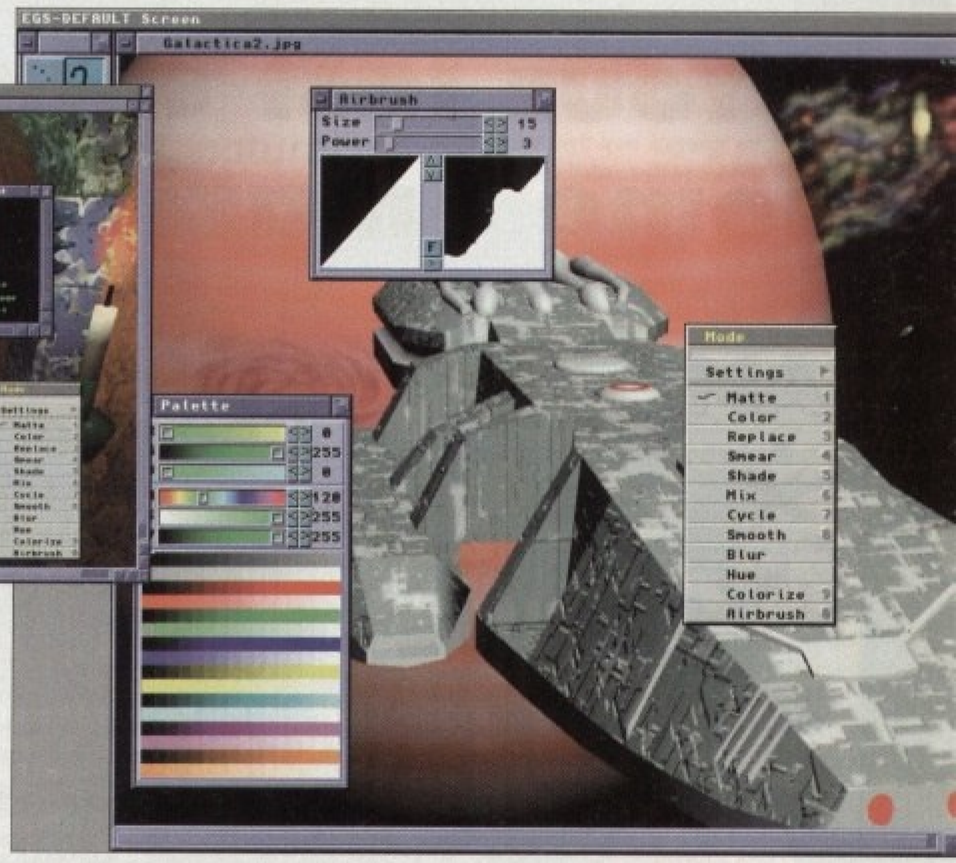
> *A winning package which should grab a chunk of the 24-bit market*

## 24-BIT IMAGES

With a 2Mb Piccolo, this means that full size 24-bit images can be opened in their own windows, as many as the user likes, and brushes cut and pasted between them. In addition, the package would appear to make full use of Piccolo's blitter, as screen update is very fast for a 24-bit package and all movement and dragging operations work in full colour.

When, say, the palette requester is on-screen and is dragged to another position, it doesn't change into a highlighted box, but instead is dragged smoothly and with no fuss around the screen.

Brushes are likewise smooth and easy to use, and can be stored in a preview box at the bottom of the tool box until needed.




As every file has its own window, the user can scroll around an image using the cursor keys or simply pull the drag bars to the required position.

This is not only very quick, but also negates the need for a big edit function, and means that when working across two or more images the artist never has to jump between spare pages or scroll around a huge page looking for the other pictures.

Painting tools are on the whole very good, though there are a couple of serious omissions. No anti-aliasing for text is one booby, as is the absence of a gradient fill option, but the rest of the package is so smooth and easy to use that one can almost forgive what in another paint program would result in a hurried trip to the bin.

The airbrush tool is a particular delight, with full control over the size, power, and form of the nozzle. Thin lines of paint surrounded by wisps of thinner colour, rings of colour, and the more traditional spray can effect are possible, and the user can create new effects using the control panel if necessary.

## NO WAITING

Brush operations are standard, with shear, flip, re-size, and rotate working as you'd expect, but in keeping with everything else there's no waiting around for a brush to reappear once rotated. Painter takes care of business very quickly.

I would have liked a perspective tool and perhaps some sort of brush feathering option, but to be fair to the package, these are usually the domain of expensive add-on packages such as TVPaint 2, and PicoPainter is after all a bundled program.

Other features which stand out are the program's use of convolutions and colour processing controls. These are similar to those used by other packages and work well, if in a faintly *déjà vû* way, and the embossing effects one can wrest from them are impressive.

When you combine a fast cheap graphics card with impressive software the likes of which this board boasts as a freebie, you have a winning package which should grab for itself a chunk of the 24-bit display market.

The £130 video module, when released, will also provide Piccolo with direct composite and Y/C output from its as yet unused connectors, and when this happens there is every possibility that Piccolo might become an impressive video performer into the bargain.

For the moment, Piccolo would benefit from an improvement in the EGS libraries and in particular some close attention to the reliability of the EGS Workbench emulation utility. Until this is brought up to the standards of Picasso and Retina, EGS cards in general will lag behind, despite the huge potential of the software.




*TVPaint Jr is one of the best bundled paint packages you could wish for*

…tures are also present and in full health, including the all-powerful density gadget, which not only provides for gradually fading colours, but can be used to "feather" a brush into the image. With the use of a density setting, the user can blend brushes from various origins with the present image and there needn't be an ugly hard edge in sight.

**SYSTEM ESSENTIALS**
RED = Essential YELLOW = Recommended

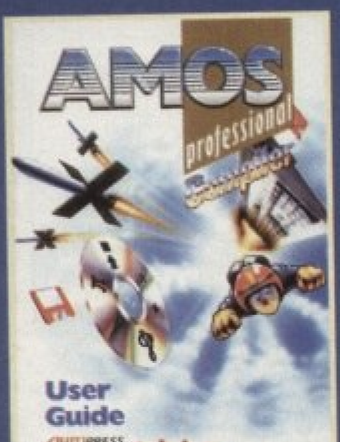
Zorro required | Hard drive | VGA monitor

**The bottom line**

Ease of use 8
Implementation 8
Value for money 9
Overall 8

Supplier: Ramiga International
Phone: 0782 398840
Price: £399 (1Mb VRAM) or £499 (2Mb)

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## Amos Professional Compiler

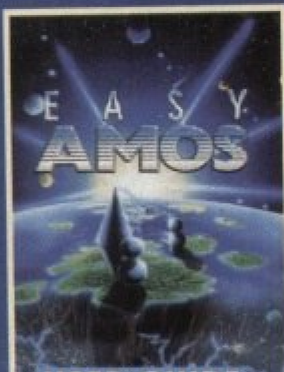
Simple-to-use Amos Pro Compiler gives your creations a kick-start, it compiles in seconds and can squash them by up to 80%. This is the updated and considerably improved version of the original Amos Compiler.

Amos Professional Compiler includes:

- 200 more commands than the original Amos Compiler
- Update to the latest version of Amos Professional
- Comprehensive user guide, plus technical support back-up

Among many superb features, Amos Professional can help you to compile programs using the intuitive user interface and compile Easy Amos, Amos and Amos Professional programs using the stand-alone compiler from the Workbench. It can also help you to write programs incorporating many calculations which can run up to five times faster.

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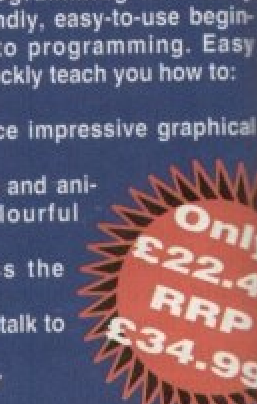

## Easy Amos

Bring your Amiga to life in the first steps to programming with Easy Amos, a friendly, easy-to-use beginners guide to programming. Easy Amos will quickly teach you how to:

- Produce impressive graphical effects
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## Amos Professional




All programs written using earlier versions of Amos and Easy Amos can be loaded into the vastly enhanced Amos Professional. This latest package includes more than 200 new commands, taking the total up to well over 700. Amos Pro is essential for the more experienced programmer, and includes a 650 page manual to get you started.

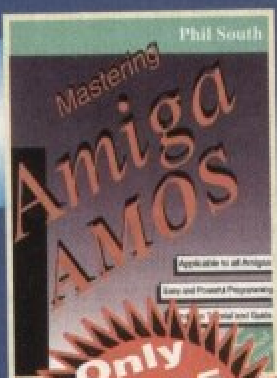
A Unique feature is the on-line help which provides details on the command at the cursor position – and another click takes you to a thoroughly documented working example featuring that command.

Amos Pro also features:

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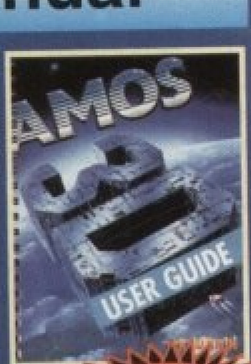
## Mastering Amiga Amos




This superbly written guide is suitable for anyone using Amos, Easy Amos or Amos Professional. If you are a novice programmer or looking for the next step after BASIC then Amos and this step-by-step tutorial is for you. Phil South provides a fascinating introduction, looking at all the main features, with plenty of example code for experimentation. You will find *Mastering Amiga Amos* a handy reference and source of programming ideas.

Only £15.95 RRP £19.95

## AMOS 3D manual




If you have the complete Amos 3D software from last month's *Amiga Computing* CoverDisk, why not make the most of it with our special manual offer?

With over 100 indispensable pages, this comprehensive ring bound manual will really help you to get to grips with Amos 3D.

- Please note that this is the original manual, not a photocopy.

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**To take advantage of any of these Amos offers simply fill in this order form and send it to Amos Offers, Europress Enterprise, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. If you are paying by credit card you can phone 0625 878888 between 9am and 1pm or fax 0625 850652**

All of these packages require 1Mb of RAM

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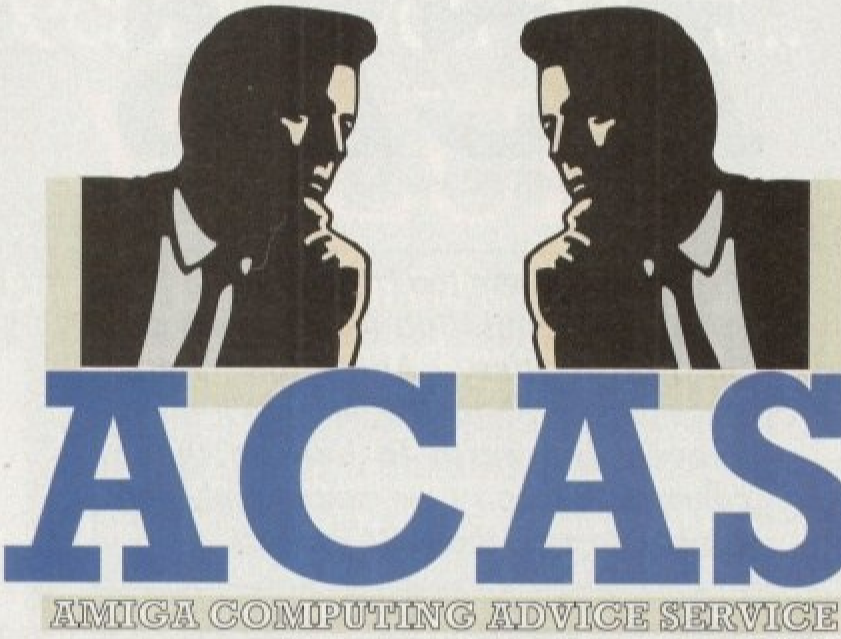
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*Allow 28 days for delivery*

☐ *Tick this box if you do not wish to receive promotional material from other companies*

From viruses to thunderstorms, we've got answers to all your problems, natural or otherwise, from our team of experts




## Liberator attack

**Q** I recently bought a couple of disks from a PD library and was dismayed to find not only that the order arrive short by a disk or two, but that two of the floppies had the Liberator virus on them.

The version I received appears to be a new one, and performs the following undesirable operations on a hard drive system:

1. Disables Virus Checker, including v6.30.
2. Writes a small file called .fastdir to the root directory.
3. Copies itself to the C: directory as Pvr (not Pvl as stated by some Virus Checker docs).
4. Inserts a line in the startup-sequence that reads "br Pvr".
5. Writes itself to any writeable bootblock disk inserted in the machine.
6. From time to time it alters every protection bit on every file on a floppy, not necessarily a bootable one, apparently chosen at random, so that only the archive bit is set. In other words, you can't edit, copy, or delete any files until you've gone through the hassle of setting the protect bits straight.
7. It launches small background programs which appear to do nothing but slowly eat memory and slow down applications by using up processor time. I first noticed this when PageStream started to run slower and slower for no apparent reason.
8. If you run a program which examines the tasks in operation and their processor usage, Liberator instantly switches all tasks off, thus preventing you from seeing what is going on.
9. Liberator can be destroyed by booting from a write-protected floppy containing Virus Checker 6.30 and using the Link/File scan option on your hard drive. Having Virus Checker 6.30 running in the hard drive startup-sequence will not protect you.

*Christopher Light, St Leonard's-on-Sea*

**A** *Sorry to hear you're having such a nightmare with this virus. As you say, Virus Checker 6.30 will do the business on the little scumbag, but BootX v5.32 and over is just as good.*

*Liberator is a menace which has popped up in various guises, and one which we had to fight off a couple of months ago in the AC offices when it sneaked onto a hard drive right under the nose of Virus Checker 6.29.*

*This latest Liberator is a perfect illustration of how quickly a virus killer can become obsolete in the face of new viruses, and underlines the need for all responsible owners to register their virus killer programs with the author.*

*Regular updates are your reward for a small shareware donation, and given that a nasty strain of something might otherwise ruin data and programs on a massive scale, the price is a very small one to pay.*

## Robot builder

**Q** I have been trying for a while now to hook an old robot arm to my Amiga 600 and so far have failed. I bought it as a toy/education tool for my son about five years ago and it's been in a cupboard ever since.

Now I reckon I can hook it up to my Amiga, like the robot arm you reviewed a while ago, but though I know a bit about Amos, I'm not sure how to go about addressing the serial port, or what extra hardware I need to get the thing to listen to me. Can you help?

*Peter Withington, Walsall*

**A** *Your best bet, unless you are a fairly advanced programmer, is to contact Switchsoft, a company specialising in hardware projects such as controlling lights and so on from the Amiga.*

*They can be reached on 0325 345773 and should be able to supply you with the relevant switching boxes and a few hints and tips on sending Amiga signals via these boxes to external devices such as your redundant robot arm.*

## Go forth

**Q** I've been programming in Basic for a few years now, and would like to use it to create a suite of simple analysis programs to help me with my postgraduate work. Not being a programmer, I've heard that Forth is good for this sort of work, but I've never seen an Amiga version of it and have no real information on it.

If you could point me in the right direction as regards a copy of Forth, or at least tell me if it's worth my while bothering with it, I'd be grateful.

*W McFadden, Bristol*

**A** *Forth was originally developed as a dedicated language for controlling radio telescopes, and its only two notable forays in the home computer market happened in the early 80s.*

*It was used as the built-in language for the Jupiter Ace micro, a short lived Spectrum look-alike, and formed the heart of the White Lightning programming package, which tried to do for the 8-bit micros what Amos and Blitz Basic do for the Amiga. On the PC there are a few commercial implementations, but the Amiga has never enjoyed this sort of Forth support.*

*The only Amiga Forth interpreter I've seen is JForth, which is supplied by*

Delta Research
PO Box 1051
San Rafael
California 94915
Phone: 0101 415 461 1442

*Alternatively, you can contact Helios Software in this country on 0623 552828.*

*As for the language's suitability, its use of stacks and reverse Polish notation make it the fastest high level language for maths calculations, so it may well be the best choice for your analytical work.*

## Hard hatting

**Q** Having lost data on two occasions due to hard drive failures, I'm beginning to lose faith in them. The first was a mystery which I put down to vibration damage, though how it happened I don't know, and the second was caused by a power spike during a recent thunder storm.

I had been playing Gunship 2000 when there was a flash, the lights went off, and my Amiga ground to a halt. As the thunder roared outside, I re-set the trip at my main fuse box and turned the machine back on with a nonchalant air. I mean, I had a trip switch and two fuses between the Amiga and the mains, so what could go wrong?

Imagine my despair when the drive reported checksum errors, then read/write errors! What happened and how can I prevent this sort of disaster ever happening again?

*A Luszjar, Birmingham*

**A** *You must be one of the most unlucky people around. Power spikes of this sort are rare, even during thunderstorms, and for it to harm your Amiga is even rarer.*

*It seems more likely that the hard drive was robbed of power as it was writing data, but as you were playing a game at the time, this may not be the case.*

*Power surge protectors can be used to cut out the possibility of power surge damage, and are useful in areas where the power supply isn't up to its usual reliable standards. PSPs are in effect just very large capacitors which will soak up the surge and release it in a controlled fashion, and they work fine.*

*You probably don't need one, and the odds of this sort of thing happening to you again must be very remote, but for peace of mind you could try scanning the ads in a PC magazine, where PSPs can normally be found for sale.*

## Special agent

**Q** I think I may have blown it big style. I have a digitiser which fits to the floppy port to draw power, and the cable recently got a little bit frayed. To fix it, I cut the end off and re-attached it, but it looks like I did it wrong.

There was no bang or puff of smoke, but ever since trying the digitiser again I find my extra floppy won't work. Have I damaged my Amiga?

*G Bates, Peterborough*

**A** *You may have fried a CIA chip, the custom chips which control input/output to the ports on the rear of your Amiga, but this is quite difficult to do. Digitisers won't send power back through the port, so a badly wired cable should really only result in no result – try again.*

*If a short circuit has bown the chip, you can check with a multimeter to see if the port is dead, using the pin out diagrams at the rear of the Amiga manual.*

*This won't tell you much, so the best course of action would be to have your machine checked by a local dealer. If they can't fix it on the premises, they should know a recognised repairer who can.*

# ACAS

AMIGA COMPUTING ADVICE SERVICE

**You got problems too? Then drop a line to Amiga Computing Advice Service, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP and we'll move heaven and earth to help in these columns. But sorry, we cannot reply personally, so save those SAEs.**

## Blow out

Q Three days ago, my A500 blew up. No, really, it blew up.

I was sitting playing a game when a loud pop was followed by a cloud of smoke from the top of the machine, and the Amiga went totally dead. There was also a cloud of sort of fluffy stuff not unlike loft insulation.

Having no money, I asked a friend who repairs TVs to take a look and he reckons it's a blown capacitor. There's a single component with its top blown off near the floppy drive and if he can get the correct replacement he says he can fix my beloved Amiga.

Is there any danger, do you think, that by fixing this capacitor we will simply leave the machine open to the same thing happening again? Could another more vital component be damaged if I just go on replacing the capacitor instead of finding the source of the fault?

*A Fraser, Aberdeen*

A *When a capacitor blows, it can go through old age or because it was subjected to current and voltages outside its rated maximums. If the former, a simple replacement job is fine, but if the latter there could be a much more serious fault which needs correcting urgently.*

*Try replacing the capacitor at first, but if there is any repetition, take the machine to a repair shop at once.*

## ECS blues

Q Owning an A500 with Workbench 1.3 is becoming a bit of a bind, and I've been considering moving up a notch. However, as the A600 is a turkey and the A500 Plus is difficult to find these days, I've been looking at ROM switchers.

I've heard that some of them don't work as well as they should and that some programs don't work with some switchers. Is this true? I'd buy an A1200, but as AGA seems to me to be a stop-gap before the AAA chip set is released next year, I don't want to be stuck with another obsolete machine.

Will I be able to use Productivity mode when I get a Kickstart 2.04 ROM?

*Warren Tide, Newton-le-Willows*

A *I don't know of any problems with ROM switchers and incompatibility. As the name suggests, a ROM switcher is more or less a completely mechanical device and shouldn't have an effect on the Amiga other than to change Kickstart ROMs. This will, of course, cause certain compatibility problems in itself, but the ROM chip rather than the switcher will be the root of this.*

*We don't share your sentiments about AGA. It is no more a stop gap than this year's Ford models are a stop gap between the 1992 range and the 1994 range. If the A1200 was the last Amiga development we were going to see for a couple of years, it would be very bad news indeed, because continual development is the only way a machine can survive in today's fast moving world.*

*As for Productivity mode, you'll need both Kickstart 2.04 and the Super Denise chip to make use of this and other ECS screen modes.*

## Dumb card

Q A friend of mine has a PC laptop which utilises the same smart cards as the A1200, and he has a 64k battery backed up SRAM card and a standard 1Mb card.

Both work perfectly and both enhance the way the laptop works, yet when I try them on my A1200 they're not nearly as good. Rather than making the machine run smoother because it has more memory, it seems if anything to go slower, and I was very disappointed. Why is the A1200 so bad at using smart cards?

*B Morrison, Wellingham*

A *The A1200 is fine at handling smart cards, it's just that the cards themselves are pretty stupid.*

*PCMCIA cards are 16-bit and they talk to the Amiga across an 8-bit data bus. This means that as far as memory goes they are slower than the chips built into the A500, never mind proper 32-bit RAM connected to the A1200 trapdoor.*

*Any A1200 program running in the fast RAM provided by a smart card will run slower and less smoothly than if the card was removed, so forget about PCMCIA for memory purposes.*

*If the cards worked well with your friend's PC laptop, I would hazard a guess that the laptop was a 286 clone, and therefore based on the same 16-bit technology as the RAM cards.*

## Serial printer

Q **I have the opportunity to buy a cheap old printer for next to nothing, but I don't know what make it is. The casing is unbadged, though the printer ribbon looks very similar to standard Epson types, and the only clues to its use are a set of DIP switches and a serial interface with a six-pin cable connection.**

**I think it was used in a council office churning out listings, so it should at least have a fast draft print rate, but can you tell me if there is any way of connecting it to my Amiga?**

***L Crichton, Cleveland***

A ***The connections for the printer's serial cable should be easy enough to suss out. What you have is probably an old Mannesman or Epson printer, some of which used a six-pin serial interface.***

***Lightwave, a company specialising in cables of all sorts, stock a six-pin to standard 25-pin D-plug cable which will allow you to connect the printer to the Amiga's serial port. Phone them on 051-630 5003, ask for part number MCL-532, and you should be on your way.***

***Just make sure that there is no gender clash between the cable and the ports (adaptors are available if this is the case), and use an Epson or Mannesman Tally printer driver. You might not get top class results, but the printer should serve well enough for listings, letters, and so on.***

## Pricey monitor puzzle

Q If, as most reviews say, the 1942 monitor is a bi-sync and will display all AGA screen modes, why don't Commodore retail it as a cheap replacement for the 1084? It uses the same case and sound circuitry, so why is it so expensive?

Fair enough, it has a better tube, but a lower price would result in much higher sales (they must have sold thousands of 1084s), thus keeping cash flow healthy if nothing else.

When a company is in the sort of financial hole Commodore have dug for themselves, surely it makes sense to cut prices and sell aggressively in bulk?

On a more technical note, how do I work out from my screen resolution the frequency needed to display it?

*Adam Cuthbertson, London*

A *Commodore's reasons for the marketing decisions they take are never easy to work out, but the reason for the 1942's relatively high price point is given in your question. The 1940 has a dot pitch of about .39, the same as the medium resolution 1084, though it is capable of screen modes the 1084 would not handle. The 1942 monitor, however, has a much better dot pitch of .28, similar to SVGA monitors, and thus has a much better quality, and more expensive, CRT. Easy answer, eh?*

*Calculating vertical frequencies is a simple matter of multiplying the number of lines the scanning beam must draw by the number of times it must do this per second. Using a 50Hz refresh rate, the calculation comes to:*

number of lines x 50 = vertical frequency

*So, for example, the maximum vertical overscan size of a hi-res no flicker screen is 550 lines. This multiplies by 50Hz to give the vertical frequency of 27.5kHz. Your monitor would have to be capable of accepting signals of this frequency before it would display this mode.*



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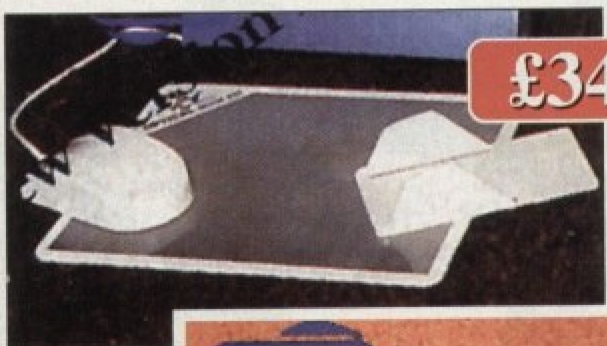

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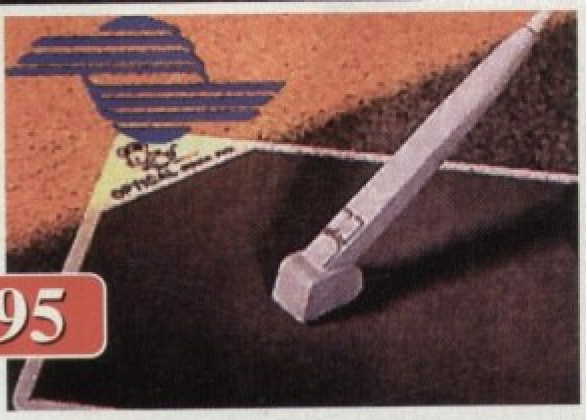



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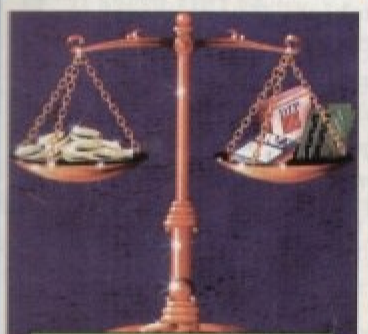
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# POWER UP

## The best buys for new Amiga owners this christmas












- FLOPPY DRIVES
- HARD DRIVES
- MONITORS
- PRINTERS
- SOFTWARE
- RAM EXPANSION
- ACCELERATION

**All you'll ever need to power up without breaking the bank**

# CONTENTS



# Introduction

***As Santa heaves into sight on the horizon and thousands of shoppers descend on Britain's retail centres, Amiga Computing tries to put things in perspective for the new Amiga owner struggling to survive the Christmas period with wallet and sanity intact***

One could be forgiven at this time of year for thinking that Britain was a nation of shoppers rather than, as Napoleon claimed, shopkeepers.

At the height of the seasonal buying binge, millions of pounds rush from pocket to cash register every hour, advertisements become ever more shrill and demanding as the big 25th approaches, and tensions rise as we fight for bargains to eak out that thinning budget.

New owners this year, most of whom will be enjoying the delights of the A1200, have more choice than ever before in terms of software and hardware, and as last month's *Software Encyclopaedia* should have answered most of your questions on the software front, we'll now concentrate on the latter.

Banging a new hard drive or 4Mb of fast RAM in a machine is a sure ticket to more computing pleasure, but the choice is a bewildering one. Add to this the huge range of printers, floppy drives, and accelerators and the decision on what to buy begins to assume nightmare proportions.

Within this short supplement, we've tried to cram as much information as we can on the essential low-cost extras every A1200 owner will want to make his or her own. Printers, hard drives, and the rest of the gang are covered, and you'll find RAM expansions dealt with by the round-up in the main magazine.

There should therefore be enough to guide most first time peripheral purchases, but for more in-depth reviews and the latest on what has been released for your machine, don't forget to read *Amiga Computing* every month.

Stevie

# Flexible friends

***If you've just bought a new machine, an extra floppy is an absolute must!***

Aside from a mouse, the most important add-on to any new system has to be an external floppy. With this in mind, AC brings you the best selection of external floppies money can buy.

## Roclite

If speed and style is what you're looking for from a floppy the Roclite is the drive of your dreams. The unit itself is by far the smallest, slimmest and fastest drive we had on test. At roughly twice the speed of the standard Commodore internal it's pretty impressive – and barely makes a sound in the process.

Unlike some of the opposition, the Roclite comes with both anti-click and anti-virus which when combined with its pure elegance and speed make it a very attractive buy.

If you're looking for a stylish slimline drive that can outpace the opposition but that still retails at a very respectable price, Roclite is the answer.

**Price Watch:** Roclite, £59,
Gordon Harwood, 0773 836781

## Cumana

Cumana drives have been around as long the Amiga and to their credit I'd be surprised is the very first unit out of the factory isn't still going strong.

Sturdy, reliable, boring, noisy, that's the Cumana – in fact we're talking the computing equivalent of the Volkswagen Beetle.

If you're not after the whistles and bells of more modern drives but simply want an external that will last longer than you will, the Cumana is the perfect choice.

**Price Watch:** Cumana, £49.95,
Cumana Limited, 0483 503121

## Power PC880B

Now here's a drive that's fit to burst with additional features. Aside from working as a standard floppy the unit also boasts an anti-virus mode which immediately write protects all the your floppies by completely disabling the write-to option.

The next feature is a slightly dubious addition which takes the form of a software/hardware copying system entitled Blitz copy. As you might have guessed this isn't meant for normal AmigaDOS copying tasks and that's about as far as we should go with this particular line of thought.

Although rather long the drive still remains surprisingly thin considering the amount of hardware stuffed inside – the anti-click, Blitz plus the standard drive mechanism. As an all-purpose drive, the PC8808 has to be one of the best buys on the market especially when its obvious flexibility is combined with a reasonable asking price. Available in both black and vanilla.

**Price Watch:** PC880B with Blitz, £60,
Power Computing, 0234 843388

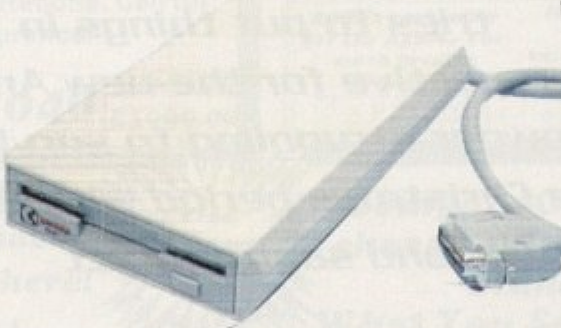
## Zydec

If you're repelled by the designer label look, the Zydec offering provides the minimalist styling and space conscious design that any environmental friendly Amiga user would happily swap his or her 2CV for.

Although small and amazingly quiet considering the lack of any anti-click hardware, the Zydec does have a few faults in comparison to its more bulky and feature-packed counterparts.

Because of the extremely slim design, Zydec have been forced to add vents on the top and to the rear of the drive. Although this may seem a perfectly acceptable design, a coffee spill could soon change your mind.

If you're looking for a basic but efficient drive the Zydec is fine, but considering the extra features on many of the opposition I must admit it wouldn't be my first choice unless desk space was extremely tight.



**Price watch:** Zydec, £51.50,
Hobbyte, 0727 856005

## Power Dual Drive

As the name suggests, our first offering from Power Computing is a twin drive comprising two PC880B drives in one amazingly small case. Like Power's single drive both units offer anti-click, anti-virus and Blitz copy.

The drives themselves are totally independent as far as the Amiga is concerned and like all the disks in the round-up, through ports and on/off switches are provided.Unlike all the other drives in the round-up the Dual Drive also boasts a separate power supply – an extremely useful addition if your machine is already heavily laden with additional hardware.

It's worth stressing that the anti-virus option does not actually check for a viral presence. Both the single and dual drives simply disable the machine's ability to write information to disk.

If you're in the market for a twin external system, the Dual Drive offers a compact, economical and feature-packed answer that avoids the power problems often encountered on heavily expanded systems.

**Price Watch:** Power Dual Drive, £125,
Power Computing, 0234 843388

## Power XL Drive

Last but not least comes the pinnacle of external and internal engineering, namely the Power XL high density drive. Once installed along with a small patch program, the XL allows any Amiga to share the 1.76Mb storage available only to the A4000.

In addition to high density use the drive can also read standard 880k disks automatically. Better still it will also read and write PC disks whether they are high, (1.44Mb) or standard (720k) double density.

Although rather pricey when initially released, the drive has had a dramatic price cut and now ships for £99.95 for the external version while the external variant is yours for £10 less.

As *AC* goes to print only the A1500/2000 version of the internal drive is available but by the time you read this article Power have promised the entire Amiga range will be supported.

Thankfully the new internal version doesn't require any soldering and simply operates as an internal add-on or replacement for your original drive.

If you take your computing seriously and regularly need to transport large files 24-bits or whatever, the XL is a real bargain.

**Price watch:** Power XL Drive, £99.95,
Power Computing, 0234 843388



*Read on as the latest in A1200 bucket seats and furry dice are put to the test*

# Go faster

For anyone with a new Amiga and a need for speed the following page should provide some essential reading and invaluable investment advice

Before the round-up begins, it's worth outlining if, when, and why, you should consider upgrading your machine. For general applications such as word processing, gameplay and basic artwork there's no real need to upgrade the basic A1200 – after all it's already five times faster than a standard A500/600.

However if your computing exploits are moving towards ray tracing, DTP or multimedia acceleration can often be essential.

Almost all the accelerator/FPU cards on the market come with space for RAM. As a result I'd strongly suggest a minimum of 2Mb should be at the top of your shopping list.

The reason is that faster processors and FPUs increase system speed – or at least that's the plan. However, if your CPU is forced to wait around for free RAM, any speed increase can soon be sacrificed.

If possible always add 32-bit trapdoor RAM in preference to PCMCIA cards. Any RAM fitted to a trapdoor expansion has two major advantages, firstly it has direct 32-bit access to the CPU/FPU, and secondly 32-bit RAM is obviously much faster and better suited to the machines architecture than the 16-bit RAM of a PCMCIA.

### Number crunching

As for adding an FPU or math co-processor the real question is application. If you're a would-be ray tracer an FPU is a must, to a lesser extent the same is true for DTP and paint packages – in short anything that depends heavily on serious number crunching.

On the subject of speed, 030s are only at their best in combination with a 68882 FPU as they boast an improved instruction set aimed directly at 030 accelerators. If on the other hand you're planning to stick with your existing 020, the difference between a 6888/1 or 2 isn't so significant.

The only other element affecting a CPU buying decision is whether to go for an Embedded controller or EC chip as opposed to the more expensive 030 with its built-in MMU or memory management unit.

In speed terms there's no real difference between the two, however a CPU with an MMU can take advantage of virtual memory – a process by which an area of a hard disk is set-up as a virtual memory space with the assistance of additional software – thereby avoiding the need for massive RAM expansion.

## M1230XA

New from Microbotics, the M1230XA range offers both the cheaper EC 68030's alongside standard 030s with built-in MMUs – both of which can employ optional 6888/1 or two FPUs. The various designs range from 40 to 50MHz with RAM configuration ranging from 0 to 8Mb. To add the finishing touch a battery backed-up clock has been thrown in for good measure.

In keeping with the Microbotics tradition for quality engineering, the boards use mostly surface mounted components and display a general build quality which make them hard to beat.

**Price Watch:** M1230XA, £177.17 to £711.99
Indie Direct, 0543 419999

## MBX1200z

As the name suggests, the MBX1200z is yet another product from Microbotics range, but this time expansion is strictly limited to RAM and the addition of an FPU. Unlike its cousin, the MBX range starts with 68881 FPUs running at 14 MHz with either 0, 4 or 8Mb or RAM.

Alternatively you can opt for the 68882 running between 25 and 50MHz with identical 0, 4 and 8Mb RAM configurations. As you'd expect the same Microbotics build quality is inherent throughout the range and like the XA series each card comes complete with a clock.

However I'd certainly question the wisdom of investing in a 4Mb 14MHz 68881 when you could buy a 4Mb 25MHz 68882 for only £50 extra. In short, steer clear of the 14MHz variants, they're simply not worth the money.

**Price Watch:** MBX1200z, £109.99 to £169.99,
Indie Direct, 0543 419999

## A1230 Turbo+

The Turbo+ has the honour of being the very first A1200 accelerator and as the name suggests, it brought the first 030 to the A1200. Unfortunately the CPU is still only available in an EC form with a maximum of 40MHz for both the CPU and optional 68882 FPU. Like the other boards it ships in various RAM and FPU configurations but alas it does work out slightly more expensive than the majority of the opposition; although this is balanced by the ability to expand up to 32Mb as opposed to the 8Mb limit on most boards.

**Price Watch:** A1230 Turbo+, £249 to £499
FPU with 4Mb RAM, Silica Systems, 081-309 1111

## PC1204 & PC1208

Not to be outdone by the likes of Microbotics and GVP, Power Computing have joined the fray with their very own range of RAM and FPU expansion boards. In an attempt to cater for all tastes the new duet can be expanded to 4 and 8Mb respectively with either 68881/2 FPUs – which like the Microbotics boards can be rated up to 50MHz.

Again like the opposition a battery back-up clock comes as standard but in a break from tradition all models in the PC1204 range are shipped with 4Mb on-board as standard – only when it comes to the FPU and MHz are you required to make a choice.

Like the Microbotics boards, the build spec is very impressive with most major components surface mounted. Given the choice it's difficult to pick a winner, as a result I'll leave the decision making to you...

**Price Watch:** PC1204 & PC1208, £105 to £619
Power Computing, 0234 843388

## Blizzard 1200

Although the Blizzard is yet to appear in the office it's still worth a mention. Like the GVP board it comes with an optional 68881/2 FPU rated up to 40MHz.

Like the smaller Power board, 4Mb of RAM come as standard with additional space for another 4Mb if required. As it has not been tested in-house it's impossible to offer an opinion but at £369.95 for an 8Mb board with 33MHz FPU it's well worth a closer look.

**Price Watch:** Blizzard, £169.95 to £369.95
Gordon Harwood, 0773 836781

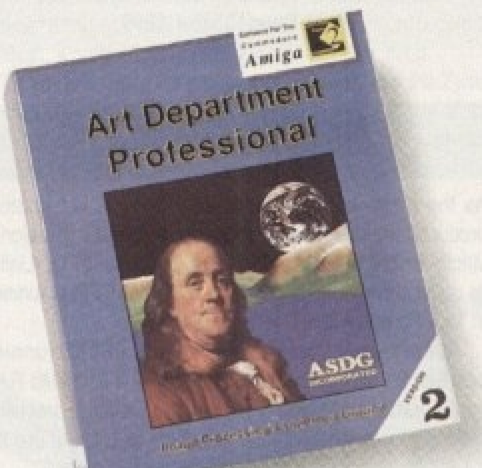
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# Monitors



***TVs are great cheap display units, but the time comes when all owners start to feel the eye strain***

Plugging an Amiga into a telly for the first time can be a great kick. Up pops a large colourful screen, with bags of sound and plenty of room for those sprites to run around in, and for pure games playing, the TV is hard to match. When it comes to serious work though the good old telly is almost useless.

There are three general choices for those in search of a monitor. First, there's the reliable and very popular medium resolution duo of Commodore's 1084ST and Philips CM8833 Mk2.

Secondly, the range of FST television/monitors being sold by our advertisers, and finally the new, more expensive, but higher quality Commodore 1940/1942 range.

## Old faithfuls

The medium resolution 1084ST and CM8833 Mk2 monitors are the mainstay of the non-TV Amiga display world, and have rendered excellent service over the years.

Both monitors offer sharp displays at the usual 640 x 256 Workbench resolutions, and with their stereo sound are ideal for games, music and video applications.

When used for a hi-res interlace mode though, these old battle horses show their weaknesses. They are incapable of accepting the much higher frequency output of a flicker fixer, and are forced to use the flickery PAL interlaced screen. Ideal for general productivity, but not recommended for hi-res work.

The CM8833 Mk2 has recently been discontinued, so bargains should be available of you look carefully.

> **Price watch:** 1084S, £179,
> Gordon Harwood (0773 836781)

## Telly compromise

There are many flat square tube (FST) televisions around with much clearer displays than the average TV, and they usually suffice for word processing and so on.

Despite the claims of the suppliers, FST tellies do not match up to true medium resolution monitors for sharpness, but they do offer certain other advantages.

For roughly the same price as a monitor, you get a remote controlled TV, often with teletext, and the speakers on a TV are usually better.

> **Price watch:** Goldstar TV/Monitor, £169.99
> 1st Choice Computers (0532 319444)

## High quality

The new Commodore 1940/42 monitor is the best all-round choice for A1200/4000 owners, because it can handle all AGA screen modes and has stereo sound into the bargain.

Accepting both the PAL lower frequency signals and the Productivity screen modes most useful for word processing and other serious work, the 1942 offers a clear, crisp display and is the ideal choice. Its cheaper cousin, the 1940, supports the same frequencies, but has a lower resolution screen.

> **Price watch:** 1942 monitor, £369
> Indie Direct (0543 419999)

---

# Hard drives

Though most new A1200 owners with hard drive aspirations are advised to buy a machine with a pre-fitted unit, many thousands buy a basic A1200 and look to upgrade it at a later date when the budget allows. For these people the hard drive road can be a rocky and painful one.

Internal hard drives can only be fitted by opening the machine and invalidating the one-year on-site warranty. In addition, though physically fitting the drive is a matter of five minutes with a screwdriver, prepping and formatting it can be a nightmare.

Depending on the supplier, the drive will either be blessed or cursed with a disk full of formatting software which can be excellent, such as 1st Computer Centre's prep disk, or appalling, as is too often the case.

The RDPrep program given away on last month's CoverDisk is a good solid answer to the formatting problem, but do try to go in with your eyes open.

Most internal IDE drives are built by four or five companies, and all perform much the same in terms of access and data transfer benchmarks. However, a new

***When it can transform your A1200 totally, you would be barking mad not to consider a hard drive***

drive from Quantum threatens to set new standards and start a speed war. The Rocket claims a seek speed of only 5ms and a maximum transfer rate of 4Mb per second, and should be reviewed in a forthcoming issue.

> **Price watch:** Quantum 85Mb Rocket drive, £190
> Siren Software (061-724 7572)

Other options include the trapdoor SCSI-RAM board from GVP and a number of external drives fitting through the PCMCIA card slot. Both have the advantage of not endangering the official warranty.

SCSI-RAM fits in the same way as a RAM board, but has SCSI interface built in and a cable running to the blanking plate at the rear of the Amiga. A 25-pin SCSI port is then available to any external SCSI device.

### A4000 HDs

Owners of the more expandable Amiga have had little more choice than their A1200 brethren over the past year, with Commodore's long-awaited A4091 SCSI-2 interface lagging far behind its parent machine in the release schedules.

Finally admitting defeat, Commodore have licensed the design of the board to a third-party, and the A4091 can at last be expected on the shelves before Christmas. Using such an interface, A4000 owners can add any SCSI device, including extra (and faster) hard drives, optical drives, professional scanners, and lots more.

whatever

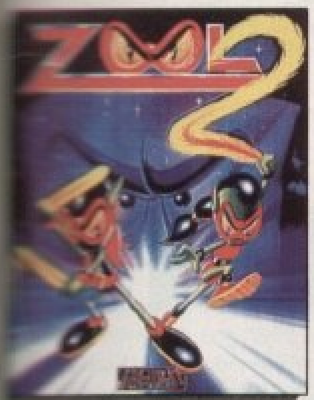
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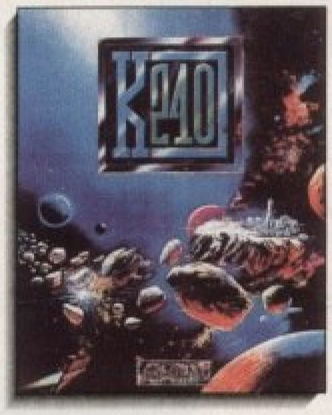
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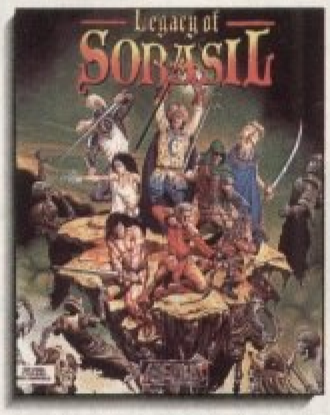
ARCADE PLATFORM



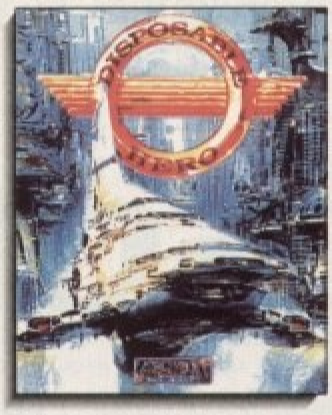
ADVENTURE/STRATEGY



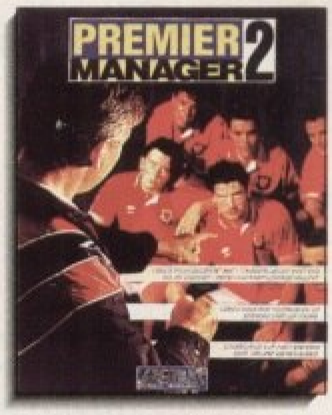

FANTASY & ROLEPLAY




SHOOT 'EM UP




FOOTBALL STRATEGY




## ZOOL 2

ZOOL and his female companion ZOOZ face a challenge which wilts the knees of the toughest Ninja's in this state of the art **PLATFORM ARCADE ACTION** sequel. **KROOL** and his accomplice **MENTAL BLOCK** are once again out to wipe imagination from the face of existence. Playing ZOOL or **ZOOZ** fight your way through NINE massive levels of hugely varied and enjoyable gameplay. Meet **ZOON**, a two headed alien dog, one head stupid, the other highly intelligent.





**Features Include:**

- Play either **ZOOL** or the all new **ZOOZ**, each with their own special strengths.
- A wide variety of highly intelligent enemies.
- Many varied power ups and collectibles.
- Hidden bonus rooms and secret levels.
- Sizzling sound FX and a choice of in game tunes.
- Nine huge levels.

*"The classic sequel to 1992's biggest selling Amiga game".*

## K240

Only when you take control of **K240** in this superb **STRATEGY** game will you understand what real pressure is.

The Terran Empire has expanded. Mankind and six Alien races are struggling to maintain peace in the face of dwindling resources. Is destruction inevitable.

You are the Commander of the mission to explore and exploit **K240**, but can you build a successful and peaceful colony deep in the recesses of space, or will greed and aggression bring the empire down.





**Features Include:**

- 6 different Alien life forms.
- 8 different types of space crafts.
- 16 different types of weapons and shields.
- Fully designable asteroid field interface.
- Highly intelligent enemy colonies.
- 40 different building structures.
- A vast range of complex interactions to understand and control.

## LEGACY OF SORASIL

**THE LEGACY OF SORASIL** is a fantastic and huge world of adventure. The fabled land of Rhia has fallen foul of a mysterious plague. Choose a party of intrepid adventurers from 8 would be Heroes and try to return the land to it's peaceful state. Battle your way through 10 vast stages against a legion of highly intelligent foes. Endless hours of solid and far reaching gameplay.





**Features Include:**

- 10 perilous quests to be completed.
- Stunning 3D isometric display.
- Simple point and click interface.
- 8 heroes, all with specialist skills and abilities.
- Eerie sound FX and tunes.
- Fully self mapping.

*"If you want challenging gameplay and a game that's going to last you can't go far wrong with this".*

**CU Amiga**

## DISPOSABLE HERO

Get that trigger finger ready for an **ARCADE SHOOT 'EM UP** that takes up the genre where others have feared to tread. The Free Worlds lie technologically bankrupt. An Alien tyranny threatens mankind. As a certified **D-HERO** it is your task to fight your way through 6 levels of non-stop heart pumping finger sweating eyeball racing thumb busting, nerve jangling action to penetrate the alien strongholds.





**Features Include:**

- Arcade quality graphics, backdrops and animation.
- Fully adjustable sound FX and in game tunes.
- Hundreds of weapon configurations.
- Mind blowing Mid-level and End-level guardians.
- Choice of assault craft with Four levels of difficulty.

*"First impressions? whoah! blast, blast, boom! death, guns, more death, action and excitement!"*

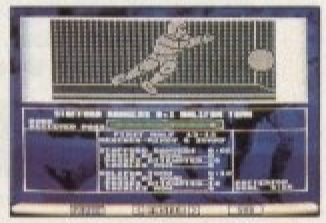
**The One**

## PREMIER MANAGER 2

**PREMIER MANAGER** transformed the face of **STRATEGY** football management games with it's accessible and enjoyable game style. It has remained in the charts since it's release late in 1992. And now, **PREMIER MANAGER 2** is ready with a whole host of added features. Have you the management skills to turn around and improve your teams performance?

Get ready to blow the whistle on **THE** football game for 1993.





**Features Include:**

- 16 playing formations with 8 playing styles and 12 match tactics.
- Negotiate wages, bonuses and contracts.
- Comprehensive banking system with changeable interest rates.
- Up to 26 players per team with limit of 4 foreign.
- Set ticket prices and crowd control.
- **IMMEDIATE** sacking possible if you're not up to the job.

*"This really is the best bits of all the footy games, bundled together and laid out on a golden plate for you".*

**The One**

GREMLIN ®

GREMLIN GRAPHICS SOFTWARE LIMITED. CARVER HOUSE, 2-4 CARVER STREET, SHEFFIELD S1 4FS. TEL 0742 753423

# ESSENTIAL SOFTWARE

# A soft touch

If you are the proud new owner, or potential new owner, of an A1200 or A4000 this Christmas, you'd be mad not to look first and foremost at software designed to make the most of your machine and its superb graphics. In other words, if a package doesn't support AGA screen modes, then in the words of some old '60s has-beens, let it be.

Over the 14 months or so since the release of Commodore's latest machines, many productivity packages, and a growing number of games, have moved over to AGA and now support it entirely.

Using these programs is the only way to make the most of your investment by forcing the Amiga's 256 colour and Ham8 graphics to the limit, and if you don't buy the AGA software you might as well not have bought an AGA Amiga.

***Buying your first Amiga software package can be a real trauma, but there are some obvious candidates for A1200 and A4000 users***

## DTP packages

### PageSetter 3

Long established as the Amiga's best budget DTP program, PageSetter 3 offers a lot of punch for your pennies. With its full AGA on-screen support, solid DTP features, and the hot-linked graphics and text editors, PS3 is superb value for money.

Not suited to full-blown professional output, PS3 is ideal for all home, club, and enthusiast uses.

**Price watch:** PageSetter 3, £42.99
1st Computer Centre (0532 319444)

### ProPage 4

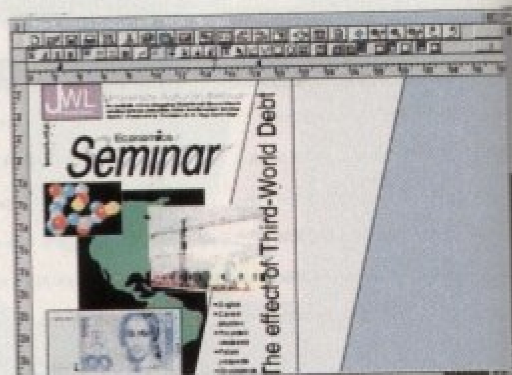
In the absence of the soon to be released PageStream 3, ProPage 4 is the only choice for high end AGA DTP. This powerful package is capable of superb professional results in full colour, and has the same hot-linked graphics and text editors as PageSetter.

Good typographical control allied to versatile layout tools and the Genie macro system makes ProPage a real contender, but it does suffer from a very non-standard user interface and is less flexible than PageStream.

**Price watch:** ProPage 4, £119.49
Hobbyte (0727 856005)

### Final Writer

A top quality word processor with lots of DTP features, Final Writer is more a publisher than either a WP or DTP program. Text rotation, graphics cropping, and column mode combined with advanced WP features make this brand new package a winner.



*Final Writer promises exciting features*

From the same producers as Final Copy II, Final Writer is fast, slick, and well finished.

**Price watch:** Final Writer, £129.99
Gordon Harwood (0773 836781)

## Paint packages

### Brilliance

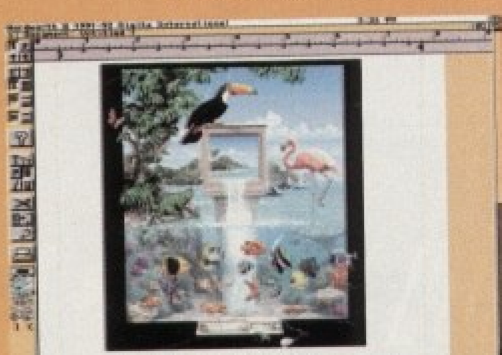
This huge package comes in two versions, both supplied as standard. Brilliance itself is a Ham8 painting program, and Brilliance Register is designed for 256 colour artwork, the idea being that splitting the functions leaves each program to get on with its own speciality as effectively as

## Word processors

### Wordworth 2

This heavyweight contender is a full wysiwyg program offering full on-screen support for 256 colour graphics, and will display Ham8 IFFs in 256 colours as well. In addition, Wordworth has a host of powerful word processing features such as automatic list generation, bookmarks, and so on. Disadvantages are that it can be slow, and in particular is snail-like when a document includes graphics.

Price watch: Wordworth 2, £129
Digita International (0395 270273)


*WordWorth 2 running in 256 colour mode*

### Final Copy II

Easily the best handler of AGA graphics, FCII is a slick, DTP-like word processor with very fast graphics import, scaling, and repositioning. The program also has a smooth user interface and is very easy to use.

On the down side, FCII falls short of many other WPs in terms of pure text-handling features, and is not really suited to creating large, multiple page documents

**Price watch:** Final Copy II, £99.95
Gordon Harwood (0773 836781)

### ProWrite 3.3

A good general purpose word processor, ProWrite offers decent text handling and AGA graphics support, falling somewhere between Wordworth and FCII for speed in that department.

This is a program which doesn't excel in any particular area, but makes a good showing in most. At its present asking price, it's a bargain.

**Price watch:** ProWrite 3.3, £40
Silica Systems (081-309 1111)

# In the pipeline...

Developments in the AGA field were slow to start with, but have picked up dramatically during 1993. All new productivity software supports AGA as standard, and most of the more popular packages have gradually been converted. The next 12 months now promise a number of mouth-watering advances.

First up will be the latest versions of two Amiga heavyweights, PageStream 3.0 and Imagine 3.0. The former was recently previewed at the World of Amiga show in Pasadena, California, and has prompted a buzz of excitement.

Using what has been described as the most Amiga-legal interface ever, PageStream 3.0 offers not only complete AGA support, but a range of advanced typographical and layout tools to rival anything presently available on the Macintosh or PC. The provisional release date is towards the middle of December and the package is likely to be expensive, but it will certainly be the best Amiga DTP package to date.

Imagine 3.0, like PageStream, has both taken AGA on-board and added many new features. The user's scene will now render directly as a Ham8 or 256 colour graphic, either in final or preview mode, and all screen resolutions are supported.

New features include field rendering for smoother animations, skeletal objects, better font support, and about 200 others. A review will be appearing in *Amiga Computing* as soon as Imagine 3.0 is released, so keep those eyes peeled.




***Brilliance... high price and performance to match***

possible.The package as a whole offers much faster AGA painting than any of its rivals, superior animation features, and many powerful graphics processing facilities. Even at its highish price tag, Brilliance is far and away the best Amiga paint program in its class.

**Price watch:** Brilliance, £149
1st Computer Centre (0532 319444)

### DPaint IV AGA

Though recently knocked from its throne by Brilliance, DPaint IV is still an excellent painting and animation tool for AGA Amiga owners. All Amiga screen modes and colour combinations are catered for, and the Move requester is still one of the easiest to use animation tools around.

Unfortunately, it is dreadfully slow in Ham8 mode, even on the A4000, and has seen little real development since release III. Good at the price, but better save up for Brilliance.

**Price watch:** DPaint IV AGA, £89.99
Micro-PACE UK (0753 551888)

### Personal Paint 2.1

Not as well known as it deserves to be, the latest version of Cloanto's paint package is a cheap and effective 256-colour register program which does not use Ham8, but will load these graphics in and convert them to 256 colours.

Painting tools are much the same as the other packages, with the possible exception of the program's use of spline curves, and there are several image processing functions which can be used to give a picture a special touch. Not the most powerful package, PPaint is nonetheless excellent value for money.

**Price watch:** Personal Paint 2.1, £49.99
Micro-Pace UK (0753 551888)

***DPaint IV AGA is slow, but does the job very well***




## Rendering packages

### Scenery Animator 4

A traditional landscape generator, Scenery Animator has been around for years, and now does a very good job of producing 3D Ham8 countryside.

Aside from the usual trees, clouds, and lakes, Animator 4 also allows the user to locate VideoScape 3D objects directly in a scene, and to place trees individually for finishing touches. Easier to use, if less powerful than Vista Pro, Scenery Animator 4 is an excellent beginner's program.

**Price watch:** Scenery Animator 4, £79.95
Meridian (081-543 3500)

### Vista Pro 3

This virtual landscaper has more options and controls than Scenery Animator 4, and presents the user with an exhaustive (and rather daunting) control panel, but doesn't offer more in the way of solid features. Vista Pro is, however, more flexible for those wishing to put in the effort.

The MakePath utility, which is used to create paths for fly-throughs, can put together some very complex flight sequences, and should give animators enough to be getting on with.

**Price watch:** Vista Pro 3, £54.95
Gordon Harwood (0773 836781)

### Real 3D v2

Real 3D v2 is a complex nightmare of a package with a cumbersome user interface, but it is also the next best thing you'll get to Lightwave without the Video Toaster or the new Lightrave dongle.

A huge list of power features includes advanced kinematic animations, particle systems, spline rendering, and so on, and there is enough in the tutorial section of the manual alone to keep the new user going for six months. Definitely not one for a beginner, but a good bet for the rendering professional.

**Price watch:** Real 3D v2, £xxx
Alternative Image (0533 440041)

# The power of the press

*Want hard copy from your latest investment? We test the best in budget printing*

If money is short but you're still desperate to get prose and pictures on paper don't part with any cash until you've read our invaluable guide to budget printing.

## Citizen Swift 90c

Perhaps the most notable aspect of the Swift 90c is automatic sheet feeding, which is something of a novelty at this end of the market.

In addition the traditional control panel has been given something of a going over. Instead of an LCD display, there's a new sliding button and menu system.

Although boasting the odd extra, the 90c isn't the quickest 9-pin you'll ever see, with a top speed of only 240cps – and that's using the ropy High Speed Draft font. What's really surprising is the quality of the 45cps NLQ fonts. While big images or curves invariably look jagged, standard text output is pretty neat, and is even better than the output of some 24-pins.

**Type:** 9-pin dot matrix
**RRP:** £219
**Speed:** 240cps draft, 45 cps NLQ
**Emulations:** Citizen 90, Epson FX-850, IBM Proprinter III
**Fonts:** Roman, Sanserif, Orator, Prestige, Script, Courier Plus, Courier Draft and High Speed Draft
**Buffer:** 8k

## Fujitsu DL1150

Full marks for strangeness, as the Fujitsu is without doubt the weirdest looking printer by a long way. Unfortunately nil points for the sheet feeder, which is tripe. Still, a number of nice looking built-in LQ fonts are easy to get at from the simplistic front panel. Performance-wise it isn't particularly noisy, is medium pace at 60cps in LQ mode and has a respectable printer buffer.

It also has a good range of emulation, though the Epson one is not the most common you could ever see. Print quality is potentially pretty good since those curves and jagged lines are nicely smoothed.

Throw in the colour option and you've got a large, lightish, easy to use printer that's good for dealing with larger amounts of text rather than graphics.

**Type:** 24-pin dot matrix
**RRP:** £365
**Speed:** 200cps draft, 60cps
**Emulations:** Fujitsu DPL24C, Epson LQ-2500/2550, IBM Proprinter XL24
**Fonts:** Courier, Pica, OCRB, Prestige Elite, Boldface PS, Dutch PS, Swiss PS. Non-LQ: Correspondence, Compressed, Draft, High-Speed Draft
**Buffer:** 24k

## Epson LQ-100

After close inspection of the rather minimalist front panel, you suddenly realise that you can't see into the machine at all, and that the sheet feeder is in fact located in the bottom of the front. This slides out to reveal a 50-page single sheet feeder, which is something of a novelty on a dot matrix printer. It then accepts the paper and slides back in again.

While the front panel does allow you to swap between the seven built-in fonts (two of which are scalable), it is also an exercise in confusion and requires guesswork or a trip to the manual before you are completely familiar with it.

As usual for an Epson ES/P2 printer, the output quality is top notch. The LQ-100 may be more rough and ready than the others in the range but it still shares the same quality engineering.

**Type:** 24-pin dot matrix
**RRP:** £210 **Speed:** 167cps draft, 60cps LQ
**Emulations:** Epson PS/2 **Typefaces:** Draft, Roman, Sans Serif, Courier, Prestige, Script
**Buffer:** 11k

## Star LC-200

While your average Star printer wouldn't win any beauty contests, they are usually very competitively priced. The LC-200 is no exception, offering bland looks, decent 24-pin performance, and an inexpensive route into colour.

The single sheet feeder slots neatly over the tractor, and there is a choice of exit holes for paper. The actual feeder is pretty good, though there's a slight tendency for paper to stick on a ridge inside and not hit the feed hole if you aren't careful. It isn't particularly bad, but it does occasionally happen. You know when the paper is in through because when it prints the LC- 200 makes a fair old racket, especially handling graphics – when it starts to screech.

Controlling the printer itself is easy enough with the front panel being an old fashioned buttons and lights job. There are four LQ typefaces, in addition to a draft typeface.

Quality-wise it ain't bad, but neither is it brilliant. If you're looking for a workhorse printer rather than a stallion, this could be the answer.

**Type:** 24-pin dot matrix
**RRP:** £259
**Speed:** 225cps draft, 56cps LQ
**Emulations:** Epson FX850, IBM
**Fonts:** Draft, Sans Serif, Courier, Orator, Script
**Buffer:** 16k

## Star LC-20

The LC-20 is a direct replacement for the LC-10, offering three built-in typefaces alongside 9-pin quality, as well as ease of use thanks to a cheap looking front panel and simple internal mechanics.

You can add a colour ribbon at minimal cost, but you'll need a printer driver – widely available from the PD. Basically you're looking at the budget 9-pin that's a bit fuzzy but thankfully much quieter than the LC-200, while offering only one less typeface.

**Type:** 24-pin dot matrix
**RRP:** £189
**Speed:**185cps draft, 45cps LQ
**Emulation:** Epson FX85, IBM Proprinter
**Fonts:** Draft, Sanserif, Orator, Courier
**Buffer:** 4k

## Citizen Swift 200

As you'd expect, the 200 sports the same command panel as its relation with assorted sliders and buttons all working in exactly the same way.

Adding the fact that the sheet feeder is just as good, there's also that excellent automatic paper feed mechanism.

Add a snap-off panel for font cartridges and you have a printer that's physically identical. Where the difference comes is in the printer engine, with the 200 offering superb 24-pin quality, and a colour option.

OK, so the control panel is definitely much cheaper than the LCD panel on the original Swift series, but it's also more sophisticated than all the other printers in this price range, and while it may not be the quickest you'll ever see it gives some of the best output.

Quality wise you're talking pretty much even with the Epson LQ-100 – although the larger characters are handled much better by the Swift. If you're looking for a best buy in this article, the Swift 200, with its six LQ fonts, cheap colour ribbon option and high quality output, is it.

**Type:** 24-pin dot matrix
RRP: £259
**Speed:** 180cps draft, 60cps LQ
**Emulations:** Citizen 200, Epson LQ, IBM Proprinter, NEC P20 **Fonts:** Roman, Sanserif, Orator, Prestige, Script, Courier Plus, Courier Draft
**Buffer:** 8k (32k and 128k options)

# Buyers

**Wilf Rees reports on how to ensure your hard-earned cash brings you best value, rather than anger and grief**

These are hard times, and despite claims to the contrary, there are lots of cowboys around eager to make a fast buck and relieve you of your cash.

Now that is not to say all traders are devious – indeed, the cowboys are rapidly becoming fewer and fewer as consumer knowledge grows. But as our mailbag proves, problems still abound, so how can we minimise any possible hassle?

If you have a good relationship with your local dealer, and you are a regular customer, buying from that source is without doubt still the best way.

He will value your regular custom, and you will not have far to go if problems occur. You will also have "an ear to the ground", and it's likely that second-hand bargains or special offers will reach you quickly.

Always ask to see any kit working, be it hardware or software. Check that all documentation accompanying it is complete. Read the warranty, including the small print. Guard against exclusions such as "No liability whatsoever is accepted" and the like.

### Seek discounts

Retain your receipt and keep it in a safe place. If the ink printout from the till-roll is one of those faded purple varieties, ask the shop owner to ink it in and sign it. Keep the packaging (inside a polythene bag in the loft is a good spot). Some warranties require returns in original packaging.

Cash has a remarkable effect. Always ask for a discount for cash, if you have it. Expect at least 10 per cent, or ask to have something thrown in with the price – ; printer leads with a printer, or disks with a major purchase.

Ask the owner to demonstrate the kit. Box shifters such as the major electrical retailers generally won't know a genlock from a gymslip, but a local computer dealer worth his salt should be able to talk knowledgeably about his stock.

Ask about advice and tips in using the purchase. If you have seen the same goods advertised cheaper elsewhere, take the advert and show it to the owner when discussing price.

Above all, be friendly, but be firm. Don't be fobbed off if something does not seem completely kosher. like missing packaging or boxes which looks well used (a possible repaired item). Be wary of opened licence agreements on software (copied?) or well-thumbed manuals (previous visitor).

Mail order is probably the source of the biggest number of complaints. Often the cause is the fault of the purchaser, in not indicating clearly the exact nature of what's needed or failing to provide essential information such as correct address or credit card number.

I will deal with methods of purchase later, but when ordering by post, be it by phone or letter, be prepared for the pitfalls. Have the advert in front of you when you place the order. Read the small print. Look out for exclusion clauses or exemptions. Telephone the company to ensure the following facts. Is the item available from stock? Is the price as advertised? Does the price include VAT? What is the cost of postage? How long will delivery take? Are the goods covered by insurance during transit? What guarantees are offered? Who pays postage in the event of breakdown?

When you telephone, give specific information regarding your set-up – Amiga, add-ons, memory additions, revisions of frequently used software and so on. Ask about compatibility. These facts could determine whether or not a prospective purchase is suitable for your system.

If it is not and the error is yours, then the vendor is under no legal obligation to return your money. Always keep all correspondence, as well as copies of your letters.

### Checkpoints

When the goods arrive, check the contents carefully to ensure everything is present. Look for your receipt of purchase. Try out the goods immediately to ensure they work properly. Store the packaging safely. If there is a fault, do not attempt to repair anything.

Should any of the above checkpoints be negative, then contact the company immediately, describing the nature of the problem. Be calm and polite, and don't start demanding redress or compensation.

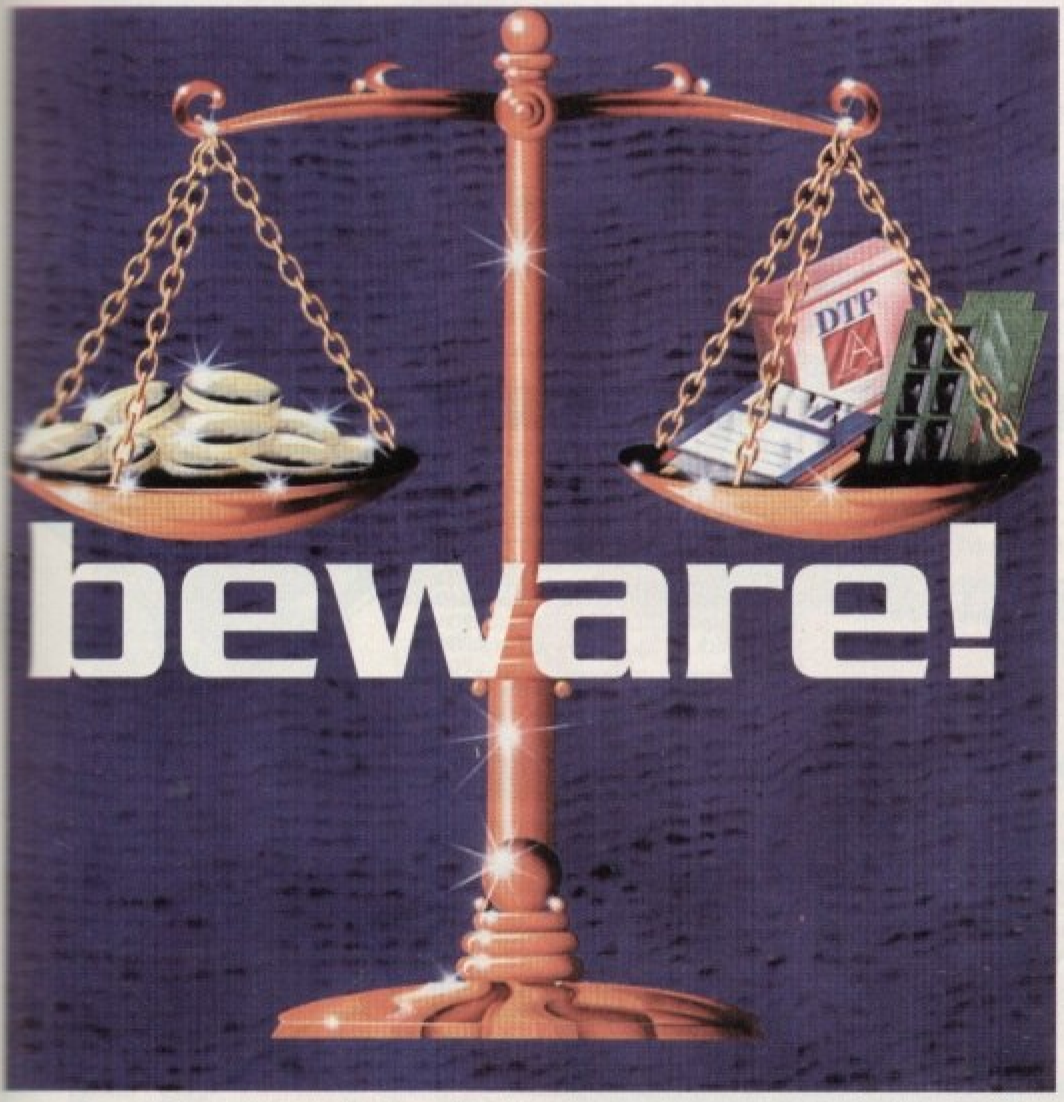
Often problems arise purely from misunderstanding and manufacturer's omissions, not directly the fault of the vendor, but they are certainly their responsibility. The vast majority of mail-order companies will correct any problem without hesitation. You may however be required to return the goods at your own cost.

When it comes to payment, cash is often the best way to deal locally, allowing you to negotiate a good deal, but when it comes to any other kind of order, the situation is quite different.

The key factor governing how you pay by mail order is if the article is over £100, and whether or not you have a credit card. The reason for this definition is embodied in the Consumer Credit Act 1974.

This Act determines statutory consumer rights affecting purchases over £100 bought on






credit. Cards such as Access, Barclaycard and Mastercard offer protection from retailer malpractice, which really means these purchases are best conducted by plastic.

An important point here to clarify is the difference between the aforementioned cards, and ones such as Switch or Connect. These are not covered by the Act, as they are debit cards, without credit facility.

Secondly, if goods are ordered on a second user card, then cover is not automatic, and such liability has never been tested in the courts. Never send cash through the post. Who do you blame if it goes missing?

If you must pay by cheque or postal order, keep the stubs or counterfoils. If credit facilities are offered, never agree to anything until you have full details of the purchase agreement. You will in all probability get better rates elsewhere.

### Guarantees

It is often the case that shops will offer a guarantee, in addition to the manufacturer's. Ask for details about repairs, and time taken. A manufacturer's guarantee can be very useful, as long as the company still exists.

Whatever a manufacturer's guarantee says, remember you can still demand your statutory rights from a shop, even if the manufacturer warranty has expired.

If your computer breaks down two days after purchase, it is unreasonable for the retailer to say "I will send it back to Crappy Computers for repair".

You can demand a replacement or a refund. If it breaks down after two months, then the situation is slightly different. On-site maintenance contracts can avoid this problem, but I hope you have better luck with Wang than I did! Ask how long a guarantee repair will take. If a manufacturer guarantees turnaround within x working days, then they are liable to compensation if they fail to achieve this.

If you do have a problem, and you have fulfilled all of the proper procedures, without any joy, here are some useful tips. Write to the company by Recorded Delivery, addressing your correspondence to the managing director stating clearly the full circumstances.

Write to any trade organisation to whom the retailer or mail-order company might belong. These organisations always have codes of practice which detail minimum standards expected of members.

Write to your credit card company enclosing a copy of the letter sent to the MD They will act as mediator in a dispute. Write to your local Trading Standards or Consumer Protection Dept. explaining all the facts and enclosing copies of correspondence.

They investigate false or misleading descriptions, as well as malpractice, and may prosecute. Don't get angry and abusive, you just end up sounding stupid and acting like a prat. Don't contemplate any silly actions such as distributing defamatory literature in front of the shop. This has happened in the past and the culprit was sued for £2,000 for damages.

If goods have failed to arrive, ring the company often, being polite but firm. Don't accept the offer of credit notes, or any similar carrots.

### Final option

When the waiting becomes unacceptable, write by Recorded Delivery stating your intention to offer a further seven days grace after which you will not accept the goods.

So, after all of this grief, you still are not satisfied. Well there is one final option, and one you might not have considered as an alternative, but you can sue.

The Small Claims Court was set up to solve just this kind of problem. It handles disputes up to £1,000. It is fast, inexpensive and fairly user-friendly. Disputes are settled in a non-threatening environment, and the arbitrator will rule there and then on the outcome.

If you want to consider this option, go along to your local county court where you can obtain leaflets which explain in detail how the whole process works.

## What are my rights?

The laws which determine consumer protection are: The Supply of Goods (Implied Terms) Act 1973; The Consumer Credit Act 1974; The Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977; The Sale of Goods Act 1979; The Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982.

These laws cover all of the UK except Scotland, where common law covers most situations – otherwise specific issues are dealt with on an individual basis. All of these laws are written in the usual gobbledygook you might expect from lawyers, but in the context of how you stand, the basic principles are:

When you buy something, the seller and yourself enter into a contract. A contract can be both written and/or verbal. Any dispute you have is solely with the seller. The manufacturer has no involvement.

Don't be fobbed off by "I'll send it back" stories. Goods must be of "merchantable quality", that is fault free and reasonably fit for the purpose for which they are sold.

The law also covers second-hand goods, but the condition will be reflected in the price, so you are not legally entitled to "top quality". Goods must be "as described", whether on the package, in an advert or by telephone.

You are entitled to reject replacement or alternative items. Goods must be "fit for the purpose described". Wood glue must glue wood. If any of the above conditions are not met, you are entitled to one of three options, depending usually upon how long you have had the goods, or how serious the problem is.

Firstly, you can reject the goods immediately and get your money back. Or you can obtain a cash payment to make up the difference between what you paid and the reduced value of the goods you bought. Finally, if you both agree, you can get a replacement or a free repair.

Do remember the element of fairness. You are not entitled to any form of redress if you examined an item when you bought it and should have noticed any problems, or were told about them at the time.

You can't expect compensation if you did the damage yourself or simply decided afterwards that you didn't want it. And if you receive something as a present, then the original buyer must pursue any problems.




# Drives

When you first buy your Amiga you're so pleased with it, you don't give the old floppy drive a second thought. It's there internally in the case, and what more do you need to know? Well, soon you realise that one floppy is never enough, and like RAM or hard disk space, you can't have too much of it.

Copying disks is a nightmare without another drive, so it's advisable to have more than one at your disposal. There's no reason why you shouldn't have more, but then you run into some difficulties which you will need to be aware of. But then that's why we're here, isn't it? Aren't you the lucky ones!

When you get to the shop and say: "Can I have a floppy drive please?" the shopkeeper will suck his cheeks in like a man estimating your plumbing bill.

"What sort of drive?" he'll say.

"Er..." you'll snap back cleverly.

And you'll feel a bit of a prat, won't you? Not to worry. Here's what he's talking about.

Internal drives are the ones like the one which is already in your Amiga. If you have a big box Amiga, like a 1500, 2000, 3000, or 4000, then you have room for more internal drives. If you have a 500, 600 or 1200 you don't. There is room for only one drive in the case and it's already there.

External drives connect to the machine via the external drive connector, on the back of the machines marked Disk Drive. This means that the external drive has its own case, and a lead which plugs into the port at the back. There are single drives and double drives, which obviously increases the power overload, but increase your productivity.

The size of the drives is not usually important, as most Amiga drives are 3.5in, but some can be had which are 5.25in. These are for IBM style big (very) floppy disks, and are only for use with IBM emulators like the Bridgecards.

A number of good high density drives are around too, which run disks which look very similar to the normal double density disks you run all the time, apart from an extra hole on the opposite side to the write protect tab, and a little HD symbol on the bottom near the sliding cover.

These disks format to 1.76Mb, or twice the capacity of a regular 880k floppy, simply by having a disk which is more dense than regular disk media.

This is just like the difference between chrome and metal cassette tapes, and the cheap ferric oxide ones you get free from the garage. There are a number of new drives which offer optical or "floptical" technology for capacities of 20Mb and 128Mb per disk, but these are rare at the moment, and obviously you pay through the nose for the drives and floppies alike.

These are bordering on removable fixed or hard disks, but without, of course, the fast access times of those mediums. Well go into speed in a moment, but take it from me for now that speed is a bonus.

## OEMs

Drives themselves are almost always made by the same manufacturers, like Citizen or Panasonic. These are called Original Equipment Manufacturers or OEMs. The drives can be used with any computer, but they need a special interface to work with the Amiga specifically.

This interface is built in to the case by the vendor – whoever builds and sells you the drive – which explains why most drives are as reliable as each other and about the same price, as they are all pretty much based on the same actual technology.

The power overheads required to run a drive from the computer's power supply are quite shallow on an Amiga 500/600 and so daisy chaining two or three drives together isn't really possible like it would be on a 2000, which has a more powerful power supply.

The best floppy drive in the world is only as good as the disks you put into it. If you buy in bulk or reformat cheap disks you will get errors of some sort at some time. This much is a fact.

The only way to minimise (notice I didn't say remove) these problems is to always use new disks for important data, and always, but always, back up. Another good case for having more than one disk drive unit!

The thing is that floppies wear out, get irradiated by hi-fi speakers, and the old "being rested on top of a Walkman trick" is a good one too. You could be walking around the shops with a disk in your pocket, and the next guy in the queue for the bus has a 16in electromagnet in his jockey shorts.

It could happen. If you use duff media or don't make back-ups, the perverted gent with the electromagnetic appliance down his pants (or whatever) is going to kill off your data, el quicko.

Also ensure that you screw the little connecting screws on your external disk drive leads into the port at the back of your machine.

Pulling the disk drive lead out is one way to ensure that your machine and the disk drive get fried, as the drive gets its power from the Amiga down this port. So make sure it's securely fitted before you turn the machine on, and don't unplug it until you've powered down.

Disks get corrupted, and there's really no way of avoiding it every once and a while. We've just been into some of the ways you

## Speed comparisons

The speed of floppies is terrible, compared to hard disks and CD ROMs. Transfer rates and access times are tossed about like so much technical salad, but the basic idea is this. Try it. If it's fast enough, buy it, if it sucks then go elsewhere.

Also, access times and transfer rates are not interdependent. It may take only 19ms to access the disk, but if it takes ten minutes to transfer the thing, what's the point?

### Floppy

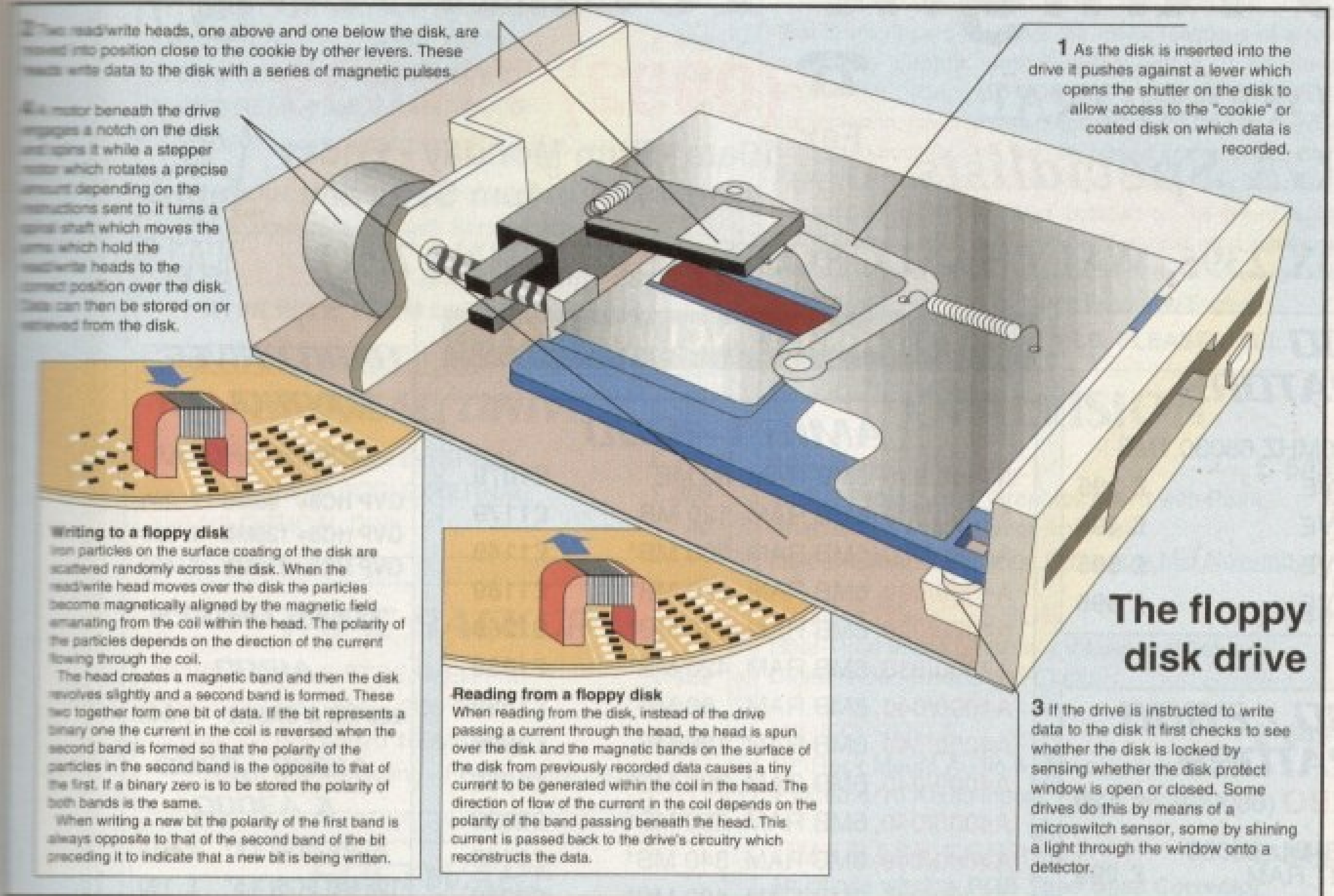
Typically have access times which are quite fast these days, in the 20ms mark, but the transfer rates are awful, in the 100 to 200kps range, so large files take ages to load/copy/save.

### Hard drives

Most HD manufacturers head for the 20 to 30ms access times, and transfer rates of around 650 to 700k per second.

### CD ROM

Faster than floppies but slower than hard disks, although the speed is getting up now. Most adverts for conventional CDs talk about transfer rates of about 150k per second, access time about 500ms. Double speed models run at about 300kps, with access times around 280ms, and the newer quad speed devices are running up to 600kps.




# s me crazy

## Phil South looks at the floppy disk. Is it friend or our foe? And why do you want one anyway?

can do the most at your end to put off this fateful day. But what happens if you do get a corrupted disk?

You can use DiskDoctor, but I wouldn't recommend it. What I would recommend is two programs – Disksalv by Dave Haynie, and a program called ARestaure by Jehan Yves Proux.

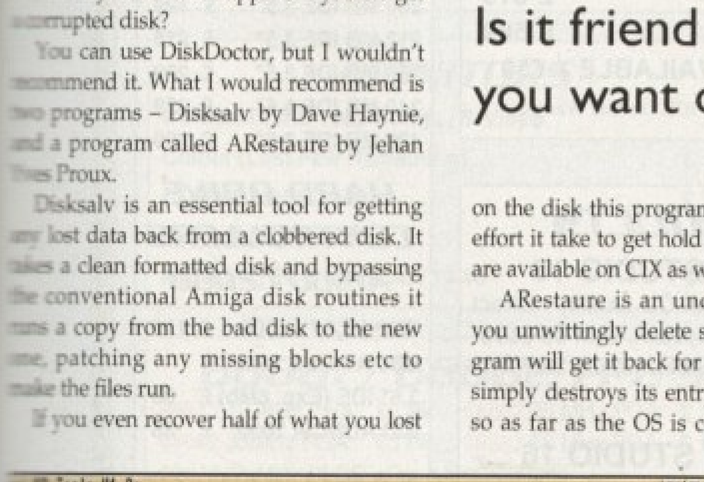
Disksalv is an essential tool for getting any lost data back from a clobbered disk. It takes a clean formatted disk and bypassing the conventional Amiga disk routines it runs a copy from the bad disk to the new one, patching any missing blocks etc to make the files run.

If you even recover half of what you lost on the disk this program is well worth the effort it take to get hold of it (new versions are available on CIX as we speak).

ARestaure is an undelete program. If you unwittingly delete something this program will get it back for you. Deleting a file simply destroys its entry on the directory, so as far as the OS is concerned it is just loose blocks of data. You can put it back on the directory map with this program – very handy for people who use point and click programs like Directory Opus or SID for their disk housekeeping.

What should you buy and why? Well this isn't a buyers' guide so I can't tell you what, but why? Well that's easy. You just have to have the money to buy one, and about £40 should cover it, plus an eye out for any extra features.

If you haven't got an external drive for your machine then go and get one, and stop complaining. You know it makes sense.




*Quarterback tools can provide detailed disk information*

## Jargon buster

**access time** This refers to how long any storage device can locate and begin loading a piece of information from the disk. See also Transfer Rate.

**daisy chaining** The act of chaining one drive onto the back of another one.

Some disk drives have another drive port on the back and you can plug another drive into it. The name comes from the way the drives look when fixed together resembling a daisy chain.

**DIP switches** A little tiny row of toggle switches fitted to a device or motherboard, usually for activating functions or configuring a device.

The DIP refers probably to the Dual In-line Package, or the little multi-legged chip that the switches are mounted on, and how they are soldered onto the board.

**drive click** Amiga drives click every few seconds or so because they are looking for a disk in the drive. Some PD programs exist to stop this, but some drives actually have a hardware solution to the problem.

**floppy disk** Actually most disks these days aren't floppy, but they were. In the history of computing they were big 5in or even 8in thin plastic things which bent as you were putting them in the drive and were generally a pain to work with. Now we have then in nice neat 3.5in hard plastic so we can get away with abusing them a bit more. Not!

**power overhead** Daisy-chaining drives together is a little bit hazardous on the A500. The power overhead (the power left after some is drawn by each device down the drive port) decreases to very low levels as more drives are added.

One or two external drives is all you can really get away with, and it's always safer to add a drive with its own power supply if you can.

**slimline** drives used to be big lunking great boxes the size of a VCR, and then came the slimline drive mechanism.

Some said at the time "some day all drives will be made this way", and they were right.

**transfer rate** The speed at which data is transferred from one device to another, like from a modem to a computer or the disk drive to the memory. See also Access Time.

# Graphics extravaganza

AMIGA Update

## Add-ons and freebies for Pixel 3D Pro, plus a new volume for the Alternative Textures Collection

For ray tracing and modelling fanatics everywhere, Pixel 3D Professional has become one of the most wanted add-ons. However, its rather frightening RRP hasn't exactly generated record breaking sales.

As a result, Axiom Software have now sweetened the pot with not only an extra software freebie but also a special anorak's edition T-shirt.

Although a pleasant touch, the idea of sporting a Dan Dare motif along with the phrase "Pixel Boy" emblazoned across the chest isn't exactly my idea of high fashion.

Leaving the marketing gimmicks aside, the real carrot for a would-be investor is the addition of Animation Workshop to the Pixel 3D Pro bundle. As its title suggests, Animation Workshop is aimed squarely at anim production and manipulation.

### Cut-down

For the countless ADPro fans out there, the Workshop screenshot will no doubt seem somewhat familiar. In fact, looks aren't all that it has in common with ADPro.

In fact, Workshop could almost be described as a cut-down version of ASDG's excellent ProControl batch processing software. With the aid of Workshop, ADPro commands can be applied automatically to each frame of an animation, thereby avoiding the sometimes terrifying process of generating your own ARexx scripts.

As a result, Workshop is only really at its best in combination with ADPro – although it can still perform impressive compilation and processing without the assistance of its expensive associate.

Although compilation is an important part of Workshop, it's by no means everything. For example, once an animation is generated, you can convert it to a different resolution and colour combination, combine it with other animations, include additional frames, split it into various smaller files, delete and replace individual frames, reverse the action, flip it and even scale it.




*Workshop offering ADPro-style anim conversion*

To aid the editing process, Workshop provides the added bonus of an on-screen frame count producing a large numeric read-out over full screen, full colour images – thereby aiding individual frame selection.

In addition to graphic talents, audio can also play a part with IFF samples playing at any point during the animation – regardless of whether the anim is looping or otherwise.

Like most other power packages, ARexx has been adopted allowing access to personalised ARexx scripts and potential links to other programs.

All round the addition of Workshop certainly doesn't do Pixel 3D Pro any harm at all – although a combination of ADPro and ProControl would be a far superior image processing combo.

Still for the dedicated ray tracer the new Pixel 3D Pro is more attractive than ever – even though it appears nothing has been done to improve the rather quirky nature of the main program, which still insists on occasionally removing or adding the odd face for no good reason.

**Product: Pixel 3D Professional**
**Price: £199.95**
**Contact: Meridian Distribution Ltd**
**081-543 3500**

## Alternative two

No doubt due to the success of their original release, Alternative Image have now consolidated their position in the texture business with the release of volume II in the Alternative Textures series.

Not surprisingly, this new collection broadly follows the format of the originals with 12 textures spread over the 12 disk collection.

With just a single image per disk, the question of value for money has to be high on the agenda. However each disk not only holds the ubiquitous 24-bit but also three variations including an 8-bit greyscale, a bump and HAM as well as the aforementioned IFF 24.

For power users with access to ADPro, ImageMaster or ImageFX, the inclusion of what are effectively downgraded versions of the original 400 x 400 IFF24s won't be of any great interest, as they can always generate their own variations from the original.

Having said that if you're on a budget instant access to the various forms could prove an invaluable tool for those who employ more than one package in their productions.

However, if we cast the proletariat aside it must be said the Jpeg format favoured by most texture libraries would mean far more images per disk – at the expense of flexibility. Anyhow the choice has been made, and if you're a multimedia type on a budget it's probably worked out in your favour.

**Product: Alternative 3D Textures II**
**Price: £40**
**Contact: Alternative Image**
**Tel: 0533 440041**




*On-line help comes as part of the package for Riel and Imagine users*

## Tracing attractions

In addition to the basic texture collection, Alternative are also sweetening the pot with a free Imagine or Real3D support disk with each investment.

Retailing at £10 each as stand-alones, the disks not only offer an obvious saving but also a collection of sound advice, graphic examples and problem solving scenes which go a long way towards helping solve the mysteries of both programs.

If you're in the market for both support disks in addition to the £40 texture collection, Alternative are offering a special bulk buy offer of just £50 for the complete set.




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All hard drives fitted after time of purchase must add £29 fitting fee

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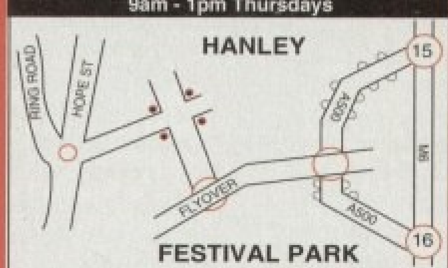
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Adam Phillips guides you through your first precarious, post-Christmas magazine rack encounter

# Visiting the newsagents

The memories of Christmas recede into the foggy corridors of your mind. The potential nightmare of computer technology destroying that special family event and creating floods of tears has faded after loading a game in for the kiddies.

They played on Oscar until their stomachs grumbled so loudly that they remembered they were hungry.

As the days and festivities pass, a nagging feeling returns: I need to know how to use this machine more, I've got to do that report and make it look professional. Oh God, we haven't even bothered looking at that Workbench manual yet – it looks like it's written in a foreign language...

You enter the newsagents, brow burrowed with determination as the visual assault begins. Tacky, glaring, day-glo computer magazine covers bellow at the retinas screaming:

*"Buy me!"*

*"No, buy me!"*

*"Don't look at him, buy me. I've got exclusive Streetfighter 2 stickers hot from Japan... or is it Grimsby printing press emporium for the hackneyed and clichéd?"*

You remember through the haze of bad design the magazine that you came in to buy – a quiet, well dressed little number with a line in intelligence, *Amiga Computing*. The cover settles your fears: "The Absolute Beginners' Guide". You think back to the last article and pick up the trail...

## Workbench

The Workbench on an Amiga is like a workshop or work top – it's the control centre where things are created, added to and destroyed along with many other things.

If you have a hard drive, simply switching your machine on will boot up the Workbench. If you've been following the guide since last month, you'll already know how to boot up the floppy disk version.

A quick reference to the difference between floppy and hard drives. A floppy drive is a nasty, slow and unreliable way of storing information and the data comes on a disk.

A hard drive is usually built inside and can store far more info (up to whatever size you want to pay for). It runs much quicker and is far, far more resilient to wear and tear (as long as you don't drop the computer).

We'll go into more depth with both of them in another issue. For now, let's concentrate on actually operating the basics of the Workbench.

Take a look at the icons that run down the left-hand side of the screen. These are picture symbols for the various programs that they represent.

Go up to the one labelled Workbench, using the red arrow (your pointer) which is controlled by your movements with the mouse. Click twice ("double click") on it quickly with the left mouse button.

You'll find that the left button is generally used for selecting options, such as loading and moving things around.

A window opens up which simply displays what files and programs the selected icon contains. Imagine this system as the modern equivalent of a Russian doll – opening up a main directory (a place where all the files and programs are kept) reveals smaller directories or files which then in turn open up to reveal still more and so forth until either you choose the desired file or the computer has displayed all the avenues available.

Again double click on the drawer labelled Utilities. This opens up another window with more icons. Select the Clock icon using the same process as before.

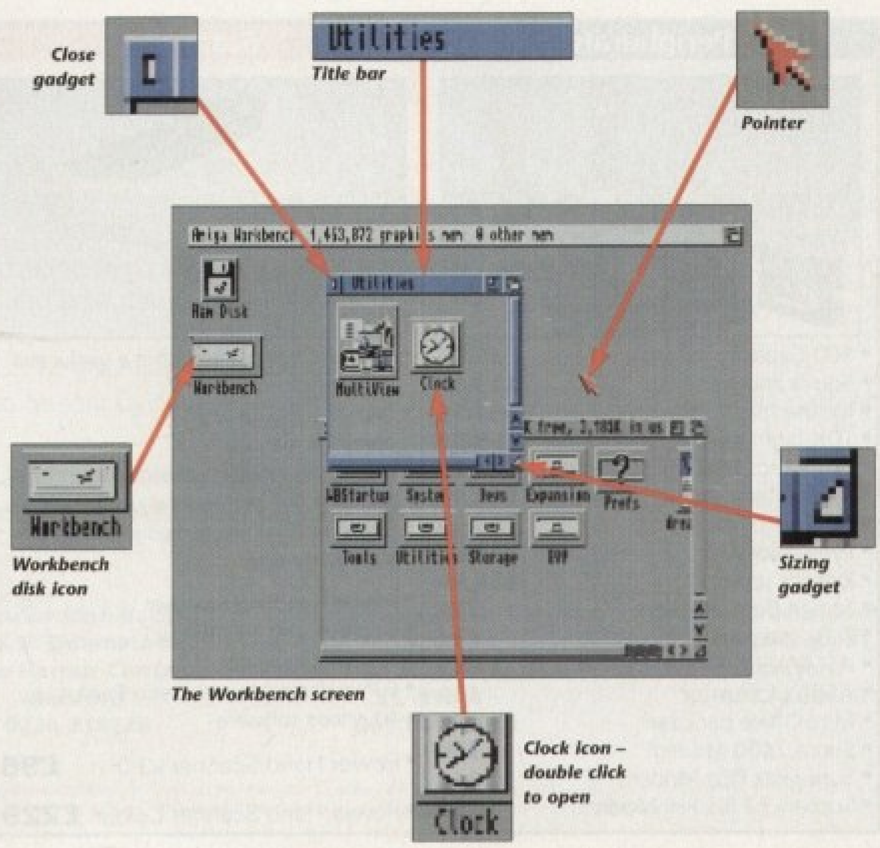
An analogue clock will appear in the top left of the screen. It doesn't have the right time but don't worry about that yet. Study the blue framed window that contains the time piece. You'll see that it has a blue title bar running along the top with the word Clock in it.

Go up to this bar, press the left button down and keep it held down. Now move the mouse and you'll see that the window follows the movement of your hand.

Bringing your finger off the button places the window in the position you put it in. Take the clock back to its original place using the same method.

Take a look at the bottom right-hand corner of the window and you'll see a small white marker that looks like a cut in half square. This is called the sizing gadget. Click and hold on it with the left button. Drag the mouse outwards away from the window and you'll see two lines stretch and move with you. These determine the size of the window. Release the button and it is redrawn to your exact requirements.

The right mouse button is commonly used for calling up pull down menus at the top of the screen and selecting them. Hold the right button down and you'll see the words Project and Settings appear at the top.




The Workbench screen

## Black box

Keeping the button pressed down, go up to Projects and a menu will appear. Still holding the key, move down the list and you'll see a black box appears around each option in the list. Rest on Digital and release your finger. The clock will now turn into a digital read-out in the top left corner.

From here, if you take a look at the top left of the window, you'll notice a little white square. Clicking on this will close the clock box.

That just about covers basic window manipulation for this month. Have a go with the other drawers in Workbench and experiment until you're 100 per cent confident with the aforementioned gadgets.

If you have any spare time, assuming you bought the Desktop Dynamite pack, open up the Wordworth v2 manual and start reading – it'll take a month to plough through...

● *Next month we'll take a look at the remaining window facilities on offer and installing software on the hard drive.*

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| • CD32 | £29 |

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- Free fitting available

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## A1200/A600 Memory Upgrades

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| • A1200 PC 1204 4MB + clock (Co-pro option) | £198 |
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| • ProRam PCM-CIA A600/A1200 | £172 |
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## Amiga 500 Hard Drives



### High Quality GVP Hard Drives

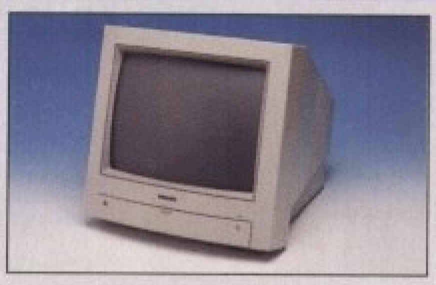
| | A500 | A1500 |
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| 120MB | £429 | £382 |
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### Internal Hard Drives for A500

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| • Philips 8833 MKII Monitor | £189 |
| • Commodore 1084s | £174 |

• When purchasing with an Amiga deduct **£10** from above pricing

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| • Dust cover for the above | £5 |

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| • Computer Mall DSD (10) disks | £6 |
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| • Pro ROM Swapper | £18 |
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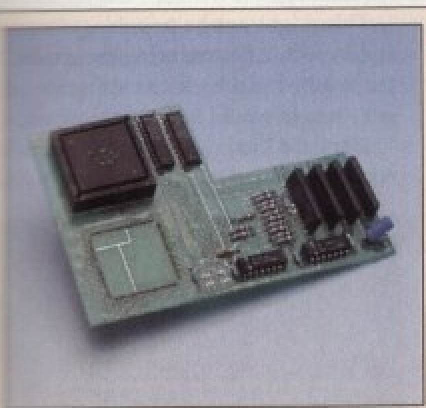
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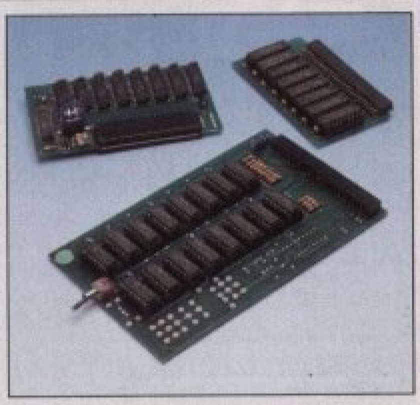
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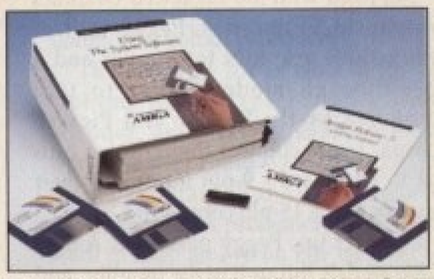
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(24pin.80 column, 240 cps draft, 80 LQ 43dB quiet mode
- Swift Pro Jet **£299**
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## Chips and Spares



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# World

**As full motion video at lastcome Amiga thanks to the new Peggy card, Stevie Kennedy goes digita**

Full motion video (FMV) has become a monster buzzword this year, and one which the industry has until recently failed to deliver on. Now though, Mpeg decoder cards are appearing in a steady trickle for all machines, and the Amiga is right in there with its first release, the Peggy board from German company Helfrich International.

A card for all Zorro II or Zorro III expansion slots, Peggy comprises the C-Cube decoder hardware, based around the CL450 video decoder, and a built-in genlock to send output to either the monitor screen or the outside world.

The latter is a little problematic as the board has no video output, just RGB on a 15-pin D-plug, so users who wish to videotape their Mpeg movies will have to use an RGB to composite encoder.

Supplied with the Enhanced Graphics System (EGS) libraries, Peggy utilises retargetable graphics techniques and a pass-through mode similar to that employed by the Piccolo and Picasso boards. Users connect their Amiga output to the board's 9-pin input and their monitor to the 15-pin connector.

Once set up, Peggy passes all Amiga video signals through to the monitor, and mixes its own with them when asked to by software so that Mpeg movies can be displayed in Workbench windows using the talents of the integral genlock. These displays are therefore in full video colour, which makes for superb previews of the finished Mpeg project.

As we go to press, software supplied with the board has yet to be finalised, and the Mpeg player utility we were supplied with used the Peggy hardware for real time playback, but was very basic. It was impossible to use windows over the Workbench screen or on an EGS display card, thus limiting the board's usefulness.

For the purposes of creating Mpeg streams in the first place, a professional encoder program was included with our Peggy card, but as this uses the EGS libraries, a suitable display card, such as Piccolo or Rainbow, must be present if you want to use the software. Additionally, the professional software costs £250 extra, though a more basic encoding package will be bundled with the board.

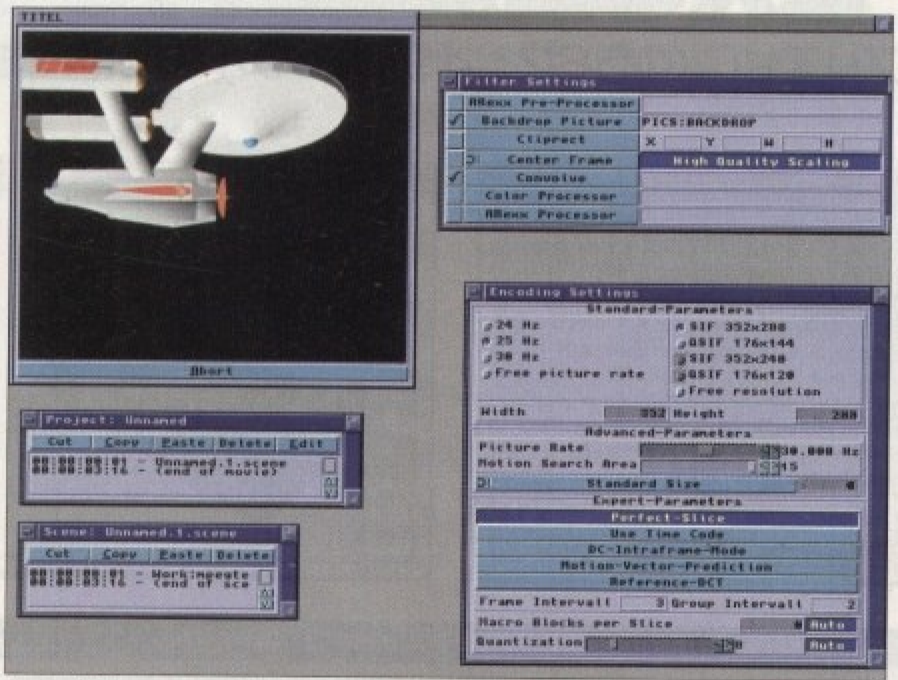
The professional software is a dream to use and offers complete control over the encoding process. Mpeg streams are treated as projects within which any number of scenes can be included, and the scenes, individual frames, or ranges of frames can be cut, pasted, and generally moved around with ease.

When the project is set up to the user's satisfaction, there are plenty of options available for those with specific requirements or a good knowledge of the technicalities of Mpeg. Playback parameters include frequency (24, 25 or 30Hz), image size, and whether there is a set rate or file size the user requires.

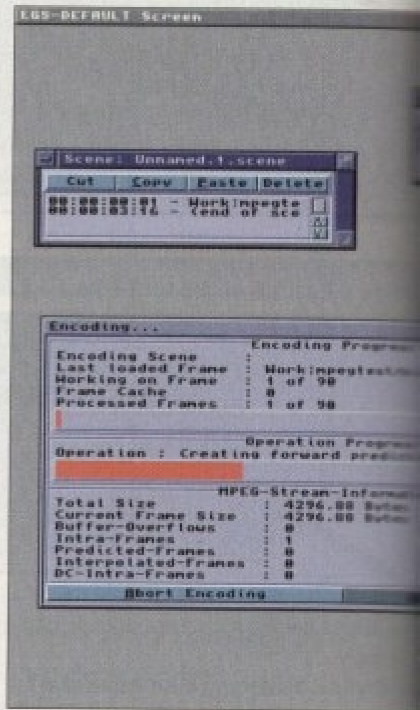
For example, if the finished Mpeg stream was to be used in a game demo and needed to fill no more than 200k on floppy or hard drive, the user could set a target size for the file and the program would endeavour to meet the requirement.

This might not be possible, of course, and in such cases reducing the quality of the finished playback or cutting the project's length would be the only answer.

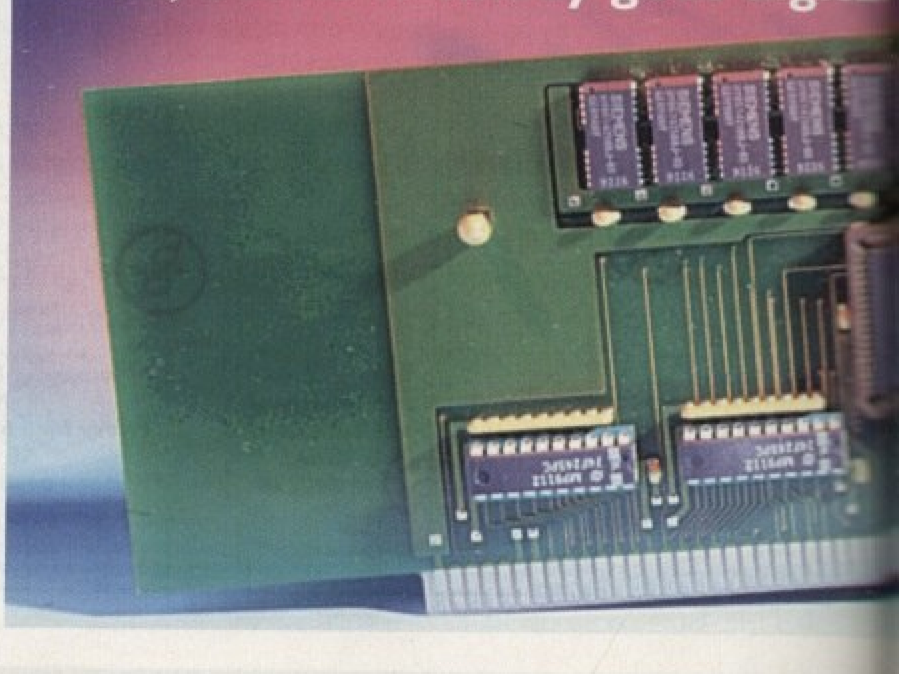
Standard Mpeg size is 352 x 288, or lo-res interlace with video overscan, but th




*The available set-up options are nothing if not comprehensive...*




*Encoding can be slow, but the end results are almost always spectacular*



## What is Mpeg?

The Mpeg video compression standard, named after the Motion Picture Expert Group which formulated the standard in 1991, is a set of rules governing the way in which video and audio is compressed such that the resulting file takes up very little space on disk and plays back at full video speed.

Beginning life as nothing more than this set of paper-bound rules, Mpeg has now reached the hardware stage with a number of companies producing decoder chips specifically designed to decompress Mpeg files (known as "streams") at 25 frames per second. The best known example at the moment is C-Cube's chip set, and it is this set which Peggy and Commodore's CD32 full motion video cartridge contain.

An Mpeg stream contains either video information alone or combined video and audio, and the Mpeg decoder's job is to extract both. A system decoder first splits the stream into timing, video, and audio information, passing these on to their own decoder chips.

When the signals have been decompressed, the timing information is used to recombine them as a complete PAL or NTSC composite video signal which can be displayed on any TV, monitor, or taped by a VCR.

In other words, from a set of files on hard drive, whether digitised video or computer animation files, the Amiga can use Mpeg to create a digital movie then play it back at full speed.

Mpeg's only major drawback at the moment is that in its first incarnation, Mpeg-1, it has a full video frame size of only 352 by 288, which works out at lo-res interlace with overscan. Picture quality is therefore far from TV broadcast standards, and is lower than normal video quality.

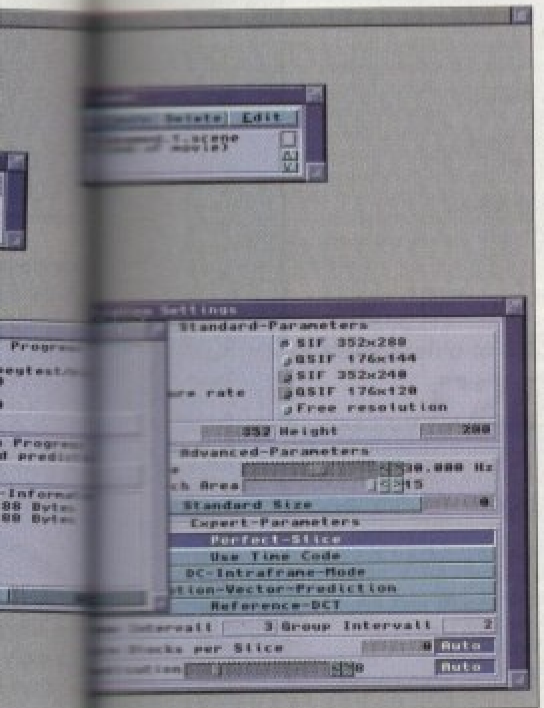
When compressing and playing back computer animations, the degradation can be marked, making Mpeg more suitable for multimedia and games work, but digital videos on CD are still possible, and as there are many ways in which the Mpeg encoder software can be tweaked, the original stream can be optimised either for smallest storage space or best quality.

n 200% ... er could ... and ... o meet ... , of cou... e quali... ng the p... answer ... 288, or ... an, but ...

...coder software has the option to cut ... to quarter screen for fast previews or ... encode to dimensions set by the user.

All frames are checked for size and scaled to the finished Mpeg size before encoding, so a lot of time can be saved if the user ensures that his or her source graphics are of the correct size to start with.

Final playback can be PAL, NTSC, or via a Workbench window, and there is an




## Class cruncher

Mpeg encoding is a complex process governed by strict rules laid down in the ISO CD11172 standard, and works in a broadly similar way to a DPaint animation.

Individual frames are not stored as full frames, but are interpreted as the difference between one frame and another, which means that a finished Mpeg stream need store only a very small amount of the original frame information.

To aid in judging this process, a number of frames, known as Intra frames, are stored completely and used as reference points in the animation. From these, the encoding program works out how much has changed between one point and another, then creates "interpolated" frames, which are the actual differences stored as code.

The techniques used to judge changes are known as forward prediction and bi-directional prediction. Forward prediction is a simple matter of stopping at an Intra frame (or I-frame) and looking ahead to the next few frames coming through the encoding process before creating interpolated frames.

Bi-directional prediction is much more effective because it looks forward and backwards to the surrounding frames and creates a more accurate picture of animation changes. This method also saves much more space than forward prediction, and is a lynch pin in the Mpeg encoding process.

As an example, a 90 frame Mpeg stream we created for this article contained 16 Intra-frames, 15 predicted frames, and 59 interpolated frames. This means that two-thirds of the original data has been interpreted by Mpeg as changes and stored in a much more efficient way.

Total file size for the 90 original frames was 6Mb, an Anim-5 file created using the frames, scaled to the same size as an Mpeg screen, came to 1.5Mb, and the finished Mpeg stream was only 425k in size. That's a 72 per cent saving in space, and to top it off the finished file will play back at 25 frames per second using Peggy's decoder hardware.

option to have the stream displayed through an EGS videolayer window, so the user who needs lots of previews or some digital movies for presentation and multimedia work should be happy enough.

The best results are obtained by using PAL interlace, but until the system software is completed and a more flexible video solution worked out, it is impossible to say how good this would look on tape.

Filtering effects can also be used to radically affect final output. A simple to use menu screen can be summoned to

> *"Just about everything the user could want in one program"*

offer the user the option to pre-process frames using an ARexx script (ADPro scripts or ProControl scripts would do nicely), drop in a backdrop picture, clip a rectangle from the frame, or apply a convolution or colour processor.

This is not the sort of close image control one would expect from a simple encoder, and keeps just about everything the user could want to do inside a single program. Bundled software is nowhere near as professional, and you'll have to keep an eye on our updates column for news of this as it appears.

### FLIPPING

At the end of the process, when the finished stream is re-played, the decoded information appears in the display window or screen the user selected from the output options, and he or she can flip backwards and forwards through the movie using on-screen VCR controls.

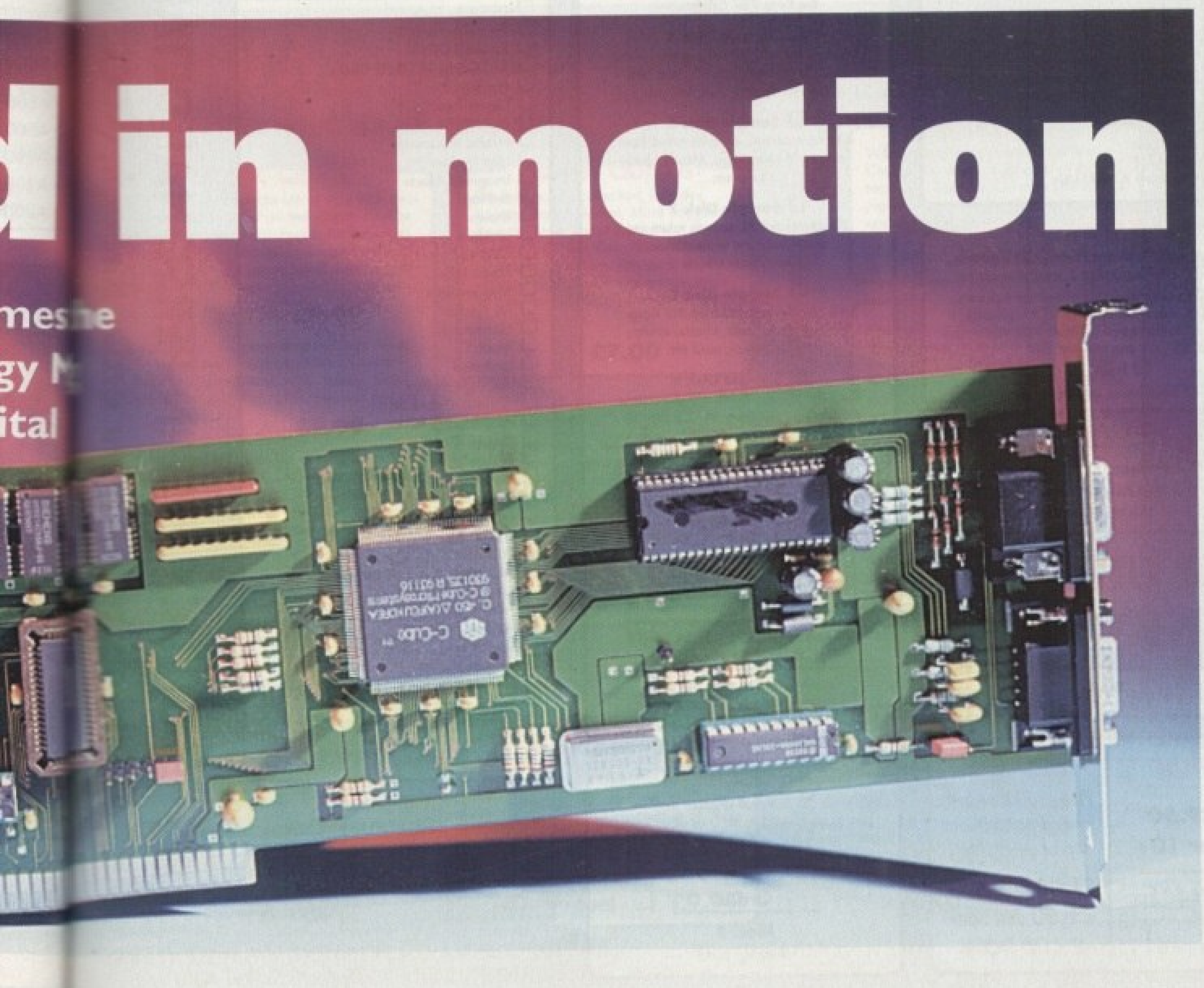
Eight levels of slow motion playback combined with fast forward and single step viewing give the user full viewing pleasure and ensure that if there is a problem with a scene it can be found and the exact position noted.

Peggy is a complete Mpeg tool for developers and those in the games and multimedia industries who need to create Mpeg movies on the Amiga. The professional encoding software is superb and the board works perfectly as a playback facility.

However, with no direct video output and no real option to add it at the moment, those who can't wait to start creating digital movies might be a little disappointed. AC

# d in motion

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### The bottom line

**Product: Peggy**
**Supplier: Ramiga International**
**Price: £530**
**Phone: 0782 398840**

**Ease-of-use: 8**
**Implementation: 6**
**Value for money: 7**
**Overall: 7**

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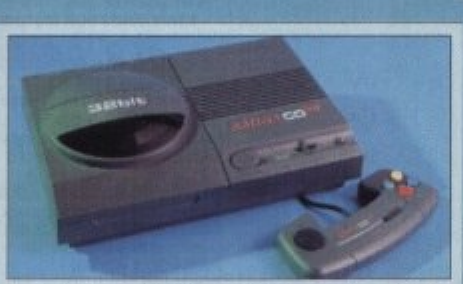
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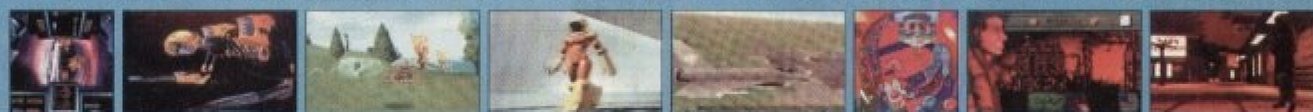
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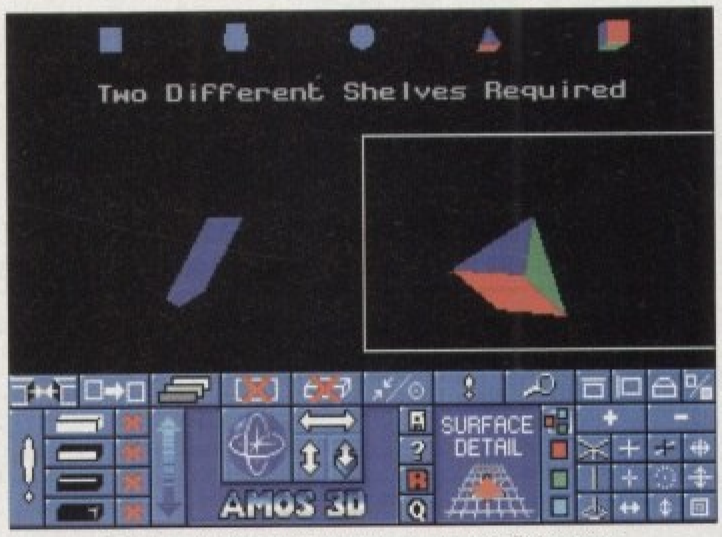
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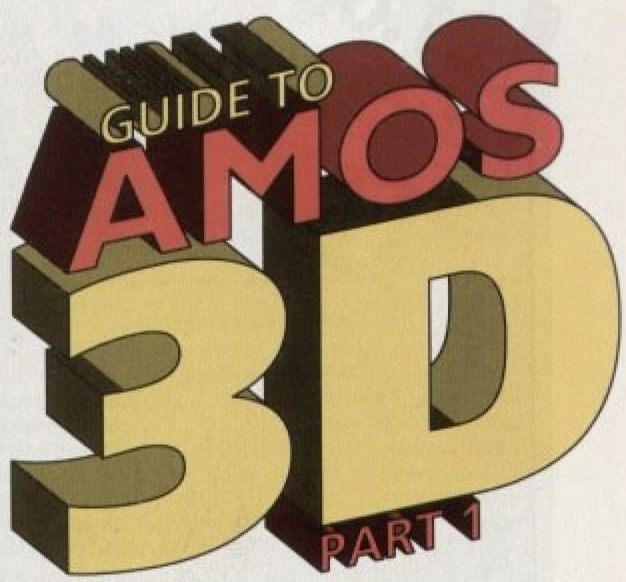
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Copy an object to a working shelf and you can start to edit it to taste




# Digital sculptures

Amos exponent Phil South looks into Amos 3D, in the first of a two-part tutorial

Well, we've given you Amos 3D, but what can you do with it? You can use it to create brilliant 3D objects for all your Amos creations, and even compile programs containing 3D shapes, too!

Amos 3D, like the compiler and other add-ons like the excellent Amos TOME, is an Amos extension. This means that it adds commands to the Amos command set. You also have an editor program called Object Modeller, or OM, with which you can create your own 3D objects for use with Amos.

You run OM either by typing OM if you're a shell user, or simply clicking on the icon if you are running from Workbench. OM prefers to run alone, so free up memory by quitting any other programs you may have running. Although there are a lot of example objects on the disk to get you going, you have to create your own objects using the OM. You create shapes using primitives and bolt them together into bigger objects.

The objects you make can be shaded any colours you like, and you can even draw small bitmaps onto the sides of shapes to make them more interesting.

The program features a lot of tools for stretching, squashing and forming primitives, like squares, circles, cubes and pyramids. You copy the primitives to work areas on the screen called "shelves", where you work on them with the mouse.

To copy a shape from the shelf it is stored in (from the ten small ones at the top of the screen) to a shelf you are working in (the two big spaces underneath) you simply click the Copy button.

Once a shape is copied into a working shelf, you can begin to move it around and alter its structure. You can deform a shape in many ways, like squashing and stretching the whole shape, or even moving a single side while keeping the rest of the shape still.

You do this by selecting a point, line or face, and deforming the selected item by clicking on the Rotation control (or the arrows next to it for finer control) while holding the button down and moving the mouse.

Selected faces have a special marker on them so you know which is the active face when doing an operation on it. Moving a single face is really clever. Here's what I mean: Load a cube into the work shelf. Select a line on the cube by using the select icons down the left-hand side.

## PULL TOOL

The tall button down the right of the selection icons is the Pull tool. Click on either end of this to pull the line back and forth. Click on another line or face and pull it back and forth. Notice how the shape changes.

The RGB tool is used for changing colours, allowing you to change the colours of the objects and faces on-screen. You can use the information in this requester to generate Amos palettes which are suitable for the objects. Once you have reshaped the primitives into something a little bit more interesting, you can glue them together to make other, more complex objects. This is done simply by selecting the faces that need to be glued together on the two objects; and once selected this is done automatically.

Shrink the object you just twisted about to half the size by squashing it in two dimensions. Select your object and click the Group Plus symbol. Now use the stretch/shrink keys to shrink the object down.

Load another object into the other work shelf. Then select a face on that object, and a face on the previous object. With two faces selected, click on the Glue button, and the two objects are automatically glued together.

If the blocks look funny when you do this it may be that the wrong block is being printed first. Use the Precedence/Culling button to correct this.

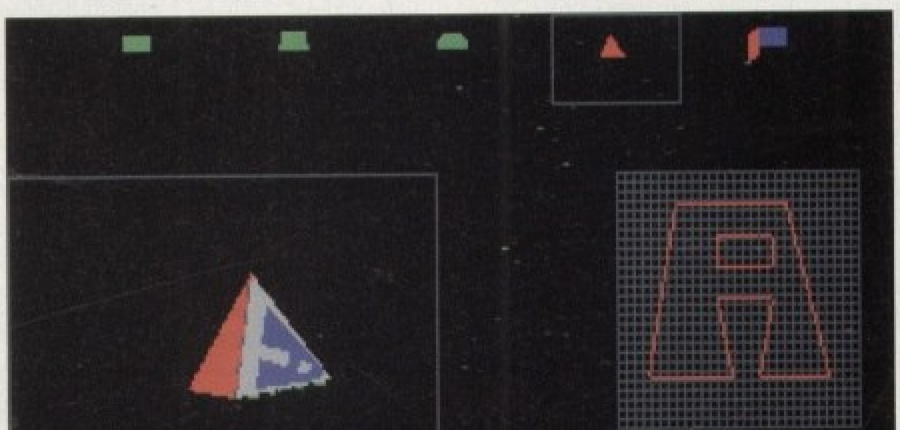
Then you can apply surface detail – patterns in four colours which you can map to the selected face of the object. This is done by drawing lines on a grid, which are then filled before they are attached to the face of the object.

You select a face, and then open the Surface Detail tools. You draw on the grid and the detail comes out on the shape, the lines being filled. The shapes you can do with this utility are fairly elementary, but it's surprising how little the brain needs in the way of clues to make a 3D shape look right.

Just a door on the side of a car shape or a window in a house can make the difference between a few shapes and some recognisable objects.

● *Now we've made a shape, next time we'll take it for a spin. See you then...*

AC



It should be easy to map surface detail onto any 3D object

## File formats

The objects are in a very specific format, and each object is in fact a collection of a number of files, not just one. If you intend moving objects around, you will have to shift all the components of the object, and not just the first one you come to.

## Head start

With Amos 3D, this double-tutorial and a copy of the original manual, you'll be incorporating 3D objects into your own programs in no time at all.

If you don't yet have the manual, turn to our disk offers on page 29 for an unbeatable offer!

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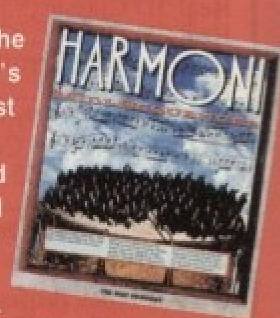
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| C346 | AMOS PRO UPDATE 1.12 |
| C347 | EXTERMIN8. The most up to date collection of virus killers available |
| C349 | SPACEBALLS MOBILE. From the makers of 'Simply state of art' |
| C350 | STAR PRINTER DRIVERS |
| C351 | PANASONIC PRINTER DRVS |
| C352 | CANON & CITIZEN DRIVERS |
| C354 | POLYED. 3D object editor |
| C360 | RSI DEMO MAKER. 500+/A1200. Now requires 2 meg of chip memory. Create stunning demo's just like the professionals. |
| C361 | THE GATHERING GFX. Fantastic art disk |
| C362 | BETTER BENCH 1.2. New replacement Workbench disk |

## LATEST

| | |
|---|---|
| C463 | THE DISK MAG ISSUE 1 |
| C464 | UNDER COVER BRILL! Excellently composed music |
| C465-2 | SPECCY EMULATOR 1.06 |
| C471 | GRAND PRIX MANAGER. Super management game |
| C472 | HYBRID INSTRUMENTS. Very high quality music instruments |
| C473 | INTRUDER ALERT |
| C474 | FORCATER/MINI SPREAD. Mini spread is a powerful but small spreadsheet. Good |
| C476 | FAST INTRO MAKER 2. Powerful demo maker |
| C477 | SAMPLE FACTORY 2. Large collection of sound fx |
| C478 | KLAW GAMES III |
| C479 | KLAW UTILITIES III |
| C480 | BOX (THE ADVENTURE). If you like text adventures you'll like this. |
| C483 | BOOTEM +BOOTGIRL. 2 superb programs, put a program on the bootblock of any disk |
| C484 | TEXT VIEWERS. A collection of text viewers & picture showers. |
| C485 | BONDMINE 12. Boulderdash! |
| C486 | ESCAPE OF BILLY BURGER. Addictive new platformer. |
| C487 | THE NATIONAL WEATHER. Almost funny animation |
| C490 | SPACE CLEANER GAME |
| C491 | SUPER PRIX |
| C492 | TV TITLES. Video titling pack |
| C494 | MAVERICK COPIER. Removes protection from over 300 games |
| C495 | KICKSTART 3 EMULATOR |
| C496 | IFF BOOT. Whilst your hard disk boots, have it display a nice IFF piccy |
| C497 | POWER DATA |
| C498 | TRUE ED 5.5 |
| C516 | BLOAD RUNNER. Taken from the Apple, a rendition of Load Runner |
| C517 | PATIENCE. The card game |
| C518 | MONACO |
| C520 | REBOUND. 2 play bat 'n ball |
| C521 | PAC SIM. New Pacman game |
| C522 | ACCOUNT MASTER |
| C523-3 | AMATEUR RADIO |
| C526 | COLOUR AIRCRAFT ART. A selection of great plane pictures |
| C527 | REVELATIONS (ART). Possibly the best hand drawn Amiga art we've yet seen |
| C528 | POST + PS FONTS |
| C529 | FRACTIONS. Educational |
| C533 | FONT FARM 3. Over 40 fonts |
| C535 | DICE COMPILER |
| C578 | ERROR INFO V2. Lets you know what error numbers mean |
| C539 | SUPER DARK. Screen blanker |
| C548 | TECHNOPHOBIA MUSIC |
| C549 | LSD 112 Inc STD CODE |
| C550 | LSD 113 Inc SAFE II |
| C552 | LSD 116 ARESTURE 2.03 |
| C553 | LSD 119 Inc COMPLETE E |
| C554 | LSD 120 Run Lame AGA |
| C555 | TALENT MEGA DEMO |
| C557 | SPACE INVASION. New version of space invaders |
| C558 | SUPER VIEWER 2.4 |
| C559 | POOLS WIZARD JNR |
| C560 | KIDS DISK 2. Three educational titles |
| C561 | ENTITY GAME |
| C562 | MUSIC BASE UTILITY. Perfect for storing your record/CD collection |
| C564 | SPECTRUM EMULATOR 1.7 |
| C565 | MUGSY HIRED HOOD |
| C569 | MICRO MARKET GAME |
| C571 | WILLY WORM. Nice snake game for 2 players |
| C572 | SIMON. Simon says? |
| C575 | LEMMINGS NIGHT OUT |
| C576 | DCOPY 3.1. Powerful copier |
| C577 | PRINTER PAL V1.0 |
| C578 | PRINT A CARD V2. A card printing utility |
| C579 | CATALOGUE 3 |
| C580 | FIREFLY SHOOT 'EM |
| C581 | SOFT AGA. AGA emulator |
| C583 | SONIC THE HEDGEHOG. Sonic game preview |
| C584 | SKID MARKS. Brilliant racer |
| C585 | COPIERS UNLIMITED. Huge collection of back catalogue copiers |
| C586 | LEMMINGS 2 HD INSTALLER |
| C587 | LIBS DISK. Loads of Libraries |
| C589 | WALL STREET |
| C590-3 | TOOL MANAGER 2 |
| C593 | DISKSALVE 2. Retrieve damaged files with ease, brilliant utility |
| C596 | THRUST DUEL |
| C597-3 | GRAPEVINE 16. Latest and greatest disk magazine |
| C600 | "VIRTUAL DREAMS" |
| C610 | LYAPUNOVIA AGA |
| C612 | KUNG FU CHARLIES BRILL NEW BEATEM UP |
| C625 | EPU "DISK STACKER" Double your Hard disk space? |
| C627-2 | MOTAROLA INVADERS 2 140 colour shootem up AGA only |

EPIC MARKETING, 31 FARINGDON RD, SWINDON, WILTS, SN1 5AR. ENGLAND. TEL: 0793 490988

Reviewers may come and go but no matter what computer, there is and always will be a public domain that churns out titles at an amazing rate to satisfy the constant appetite of software-hungry punters.

To all the PD libraries who send this wealth of material in, please keep it rolling through our letterbox and if it's any good, we'll do our damnest to review it...

Adam Phillips takes over from that guru of the public domain, Phil Morse, hoping to fill his demi god-like shoes with this first crop of reviews

# PUBLIC SECTOR

## Amiga 3

### Holmes Bros

Amiga 3 is a tasty magazine disk containing both games and utilities. It's been pulled together by the Holmes brothers (PD's answer to the Mario lads) and offers great value for money.

When booted in, the user is presented with a menu of the different programs on offer – games on the left, utilities and full instructions (what a nice change) on the right. Click on the desired title and you're off...

### Alien Bash

The film Aliens has influenced many games from Xenomorph to Alien Breed. Its mixture of suspense and action has obviously caught software developers' imaginations.

Enter Alien Bash, the public domain's answer to the epic Jim Cameron flick. Viewed from above, the player has to guide his gun-wielding man round 50 scrolling levels of mayhem, rescuing prisoners captured by the aliens of the title.

These extra-terrestrials are no walk over – it took me a while to get off level one due to the constant bombardment of bouncing masses of brains inside bubbles (that's what they look like anyway). I regularly found myself being pushed into a corner and swamped to death by these creatures.

Having said this though, once you've killed one of them, you are rewarded by a huge splattering of blood on the floor. Quite soon the game screen begins to take on the look of a splatter movie.

To aid and abet you in the struggle for human supremacy are a number of meaty power-ups including more speed, shields, triple firer, missile launcher and a smart bomb that clears the screen you're on.

The prisoners that need saving are found surrounded by a shield, so frantic bashing on the Fire button ensues while all around the aliens close in. Once destroyed, simply touch the hostage and move on to the next one.

Although being the weakest game on the disk, it's still good fun. It can be extremely frustrating at times when you simply can't run quick enough to get away from the xenomorphs and end up dying horribly.

A500 owners will have to put up with the occasional juddery scrolling but A1200 owners need not worry.

As it stands, Alien Bash is quite a jolly game and does have that "one more go" feel – a good reason to take a look at Amiga 3.



*Before... a healthy young pup of an alien*

*After... ketchup galore*

### Bomb Jacky

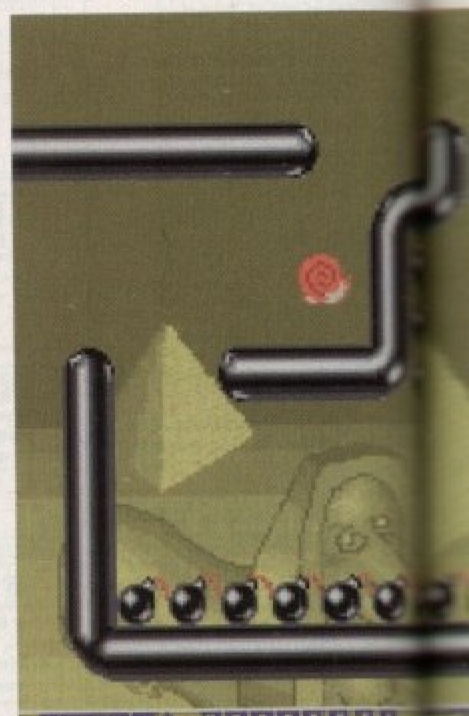
I remember in the old days going down to the software shop in Macclesfield, buying Bomb Jack on my Spectrum and playing the little bugger to death.

As you've guessed even with the cunning use of a Y on the end of the name this is a souped-up, multi-screened, scrolling, power-up toting version of the arcade classic.

The scenario hasn't changed – jump and run your way through each level collecting all the bombs before their fuses run out and blow you to kingdom come.

Enemies are in ample supply and come in various guises ranging from snails and melons to mutated pacmen. Some simply follow a set path while others constantly chase and annoy the hell out of you.

The graphics are fun if a little ill-



*Collect the bombs with your T1000 man before the time runs out*

## Motorola Invaders 2

### Pathfinder PD

We've already had variants of Alien Breed and Bomb Jack this month and now with Motorola Invaders 2 for the A1200 only, we step back in time to the very creation of the arcade game itself – Space Invaders.

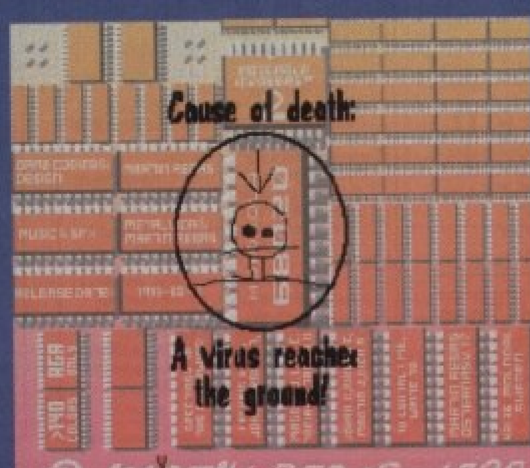
That game happened to revolutionise the entertainment and leisure industry as we know it. MI 2 is a title which dangerously veers towards that vague idea of a cult classic taking elements from Galaxians and Space Invaders and using them in a stylistic and bold way.

The first thing I noticed when I booted up is one of the longest and clearest samples I've heard from an Amiga. If you're a Metallica fan, then the delight is doubled as the thrash group hammer out the chords.

The actual gameplay is a case of shooting up the viruses living inside your computer. They come in various formations from massive crowds of the blighters to the organised ranks as seen in Space Invaders.

When shot, the diseased bytes don't blow up, they drop to the ground like dead flies and if they hit you on the way down, a life is lost. This can make the program quite difficult to play and requires careful shooting and some tactical manoeuvring.

Motorola 2 has eight levels and four "differing playing styles" and is worth a look if only to see something as old as the hills done with style, instant appeal and panache.



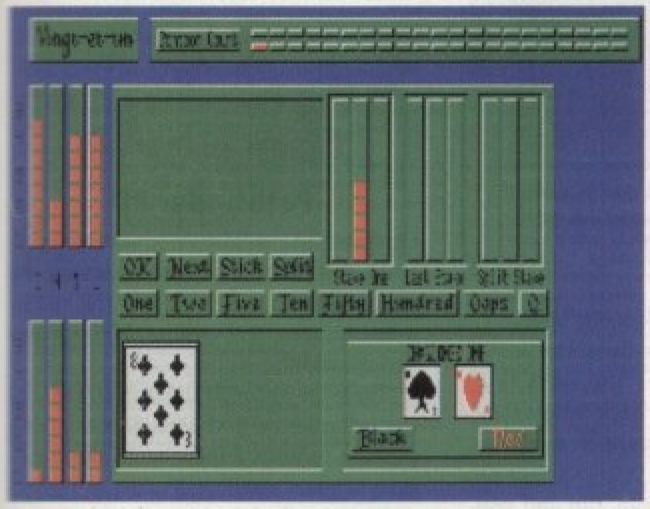

*The post mortem of a failed attempt*

## Calling all PD libraries...

...and individuals with anything remotely worth my while having a peek at. If you want something released as PD, or you're a library with stacks of hot new stuff that you haven't seen reviewed in these pages yet, why not drop me a line with a copy, full documentation and everything clearly labelled. I promise I'll at least look at your work.

From music to education, business to utilities – anything you felt deserved your shoving onto a floppy disk, lemme at it and I'll do the rest. Address?

*Adam Phillips, PD submissions, Amiga Computing*
*Europa House, Adlington Park,*
*Macclesfield SK10 4NP*




*Lay your money down and clean out the bank*

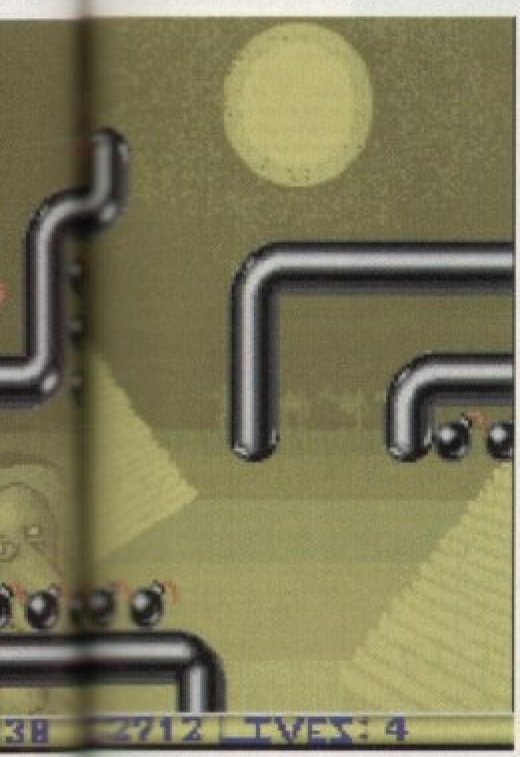
defined in places but on the whole, they hang together well. Power ups are many and varied with speedup boots and keys to unlock the entrance just being a small slice of what's on offer.

The all-important gameplay is very addictive and falls safely on the side of challenging and not tedious.

### Vingt-et-Un

If you hadn't already guessed or you don't know French, Vingt-et-Un is a computer version of the card game pontoon. The objective is to get either as close as possible to or equal 21 points without going over and beat the other players effort (in this case, the computer).

For the gambling fanatics with no money among us, bets can be laid through the stakes columns. It's a touch unwieldy but practice makes perfect. The game is presented clearly and is easy to use so if you like the card game, you'll love the computer version.




### Doody

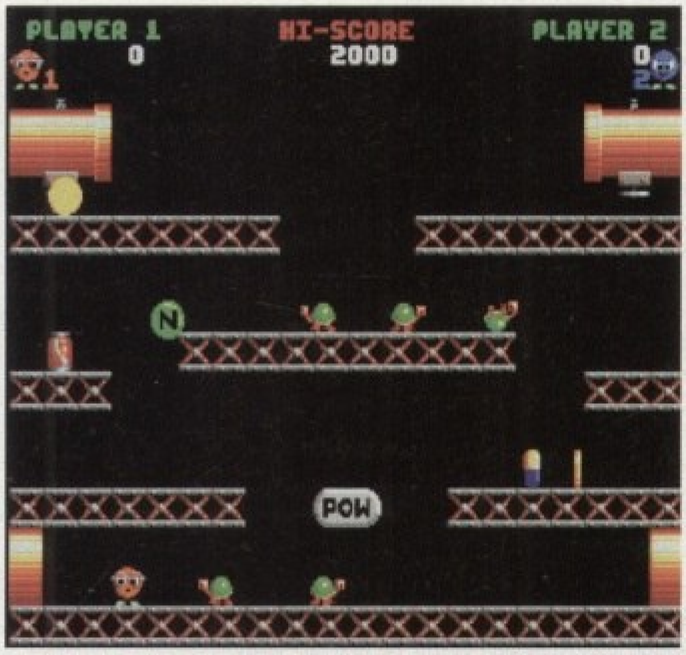
Make no mistake – Doody is a cutesy game; a saccharin-soaked, cuddly for the kiddies' kinda title set in a coke-and-pill-ridden sewer system.

The action centres around a single screen made up of platforms, the story being that you (and an optional second player) have fallen down into the system and must work your way up through 32 levels to escape, destroying all who stand in the way.

Your orange blob of a character starts at the bottom of the screen while the enemy pour out of the pipes at the top. These are usually turtles with green shells to begin with and in later levels, the program almost sets new standards in environmental simulators with the introduction of penguins.

By moving Doody underneath the platform that the turtle is walking along, it is possible to head-butt the floor and knock our amphibian friend off his feet. Next, it's a mad dash to get up onto the platform to kick him off into oblivion.

If left too long, the turtle will get up, change its colour and move even faster. To make life easier, there is a POW block at the bottom of the screen – hit it and all the creatures fall off their feet automatically and no, it's not possible to keep doing it over and over again; the player can only use it a certain amount of times.




*If you go down to the sewer today...*

Graphically, the game looks a little basic but there are nice touches with the animation – if you leave your character too long, he yawns and goes to sleep. The turtles, when changing colour, put on the new one as if it were a jacket. These and others add a real feel of professionalism to the title.

A1200 owners will have to look out for screen corruption if they have a hard drive because it appears to interfere with the game coding in some way. The program is still playable though but it's a bit of a shame this can't rectified in some way.

Doody is a cracking game which has that Bubble Bobble/Rainbow Islands feel to it, making this title the most absorbing of all those on the disk.

### Atoms

I've seen this kind of game on a couple of occasions and it has be said that this version is the slickest of the lot in terms of presentation.

The basic concept is this – each player (two to four) places a coloured atom each turn on the board which is basically a large grid. It's possible to place atoms in

## Mr Men Olympics 1993

**Virus Free Software**

Everyone knows the Mr Men – Mr Tickle, Mr Happy, Mr Messy and Miss Single Parent. They played a part in most childhoods after the 60s, and Unity, the people behind this release, have obviously decided that they didn't want to squander such great material.

So they've produced a children's game that plays and looks like a commercial piece of software.

The actual game centres round five different sporting events – the 100 metres, weight lifting, the hammer, pole vault and javelin throwing. Like all sports sims, the majority of these events are performed by waggling the joystick frantically to gain speed or strength and then hitting the Fire button at the right moment to succeed.



*Mr Tickle is running up the track as Mr Skinny prepares himself to be launched into orbit*

The javelin, for instance, involves speeding Mr Tickle up via the joystick and when he reaches the throw line, hitting the Fire button.

It doesn't end there – the javelin in question is actually Mr Skinny who flies through the air and the player needs to help him further by flapping the characters arms with the controller.

All the levels with the exception of the hammer throwing section work well on a simplistic level and are ideal for young children.

More events would have been better but the presentation, ease of use and every character looking like it's been lifted off the page of the Roger Hargreaves classics, makes this title into something a little special.

If you want your young six-year-old kids to play something a little different from the usual beat-'em-up games then slip this into the disk drive – they're sure to have a good time.

# Rags to Riches

## Pathfinder PD

If Monopoly is your game then Rags to Riches is the ideal electronic companion. It's an original board game designed and produced on computer so you never have to worry about losing any of the pieces.

The basic idea is to make as many hotels as possible and amass large amounts of wedge. This is not a simply as it sounds – there are only a certain amount available to be built in certain locations so the players (two to four) have to rush to outdo each other.

On the path to successful building, plans, planning approval, electricity, plumbing brickwork and other factors have to be bought.

There are plenty of variables such as windfalls and gambling and the whole package works well, but unfortunately I couldn't help feeling that everything was just too random and not enough skill based. Having said that though, if you're a board game nut then this could be just up your Park Lane.




*Move around that board and amass your riches*

➤

the squares together, making them unstable.

Once a certain number of atoms are grouped together, they explode across the board, changing everything that gets in the way to their colour.

There are various rules affecting the gameplay such as chain reactions caused by other players' atoms reacting off yours. This can lead to situations where you think the game is in the bag but the opposition's single atom is in an ideal spot to completely wipe out all your colours.

A one-on-one against the computer option would have given the game more levity but as it stands, it's a good laugh especially with four people involved.

### Boot Intro Construction Set

When the magazine firsts boots in, the user is presented with an intro screen containing information inside coloured strips.

BICS is the program that does this and now the same can be done to a disk of your choice. By selecting the construction set, the user is presented with a screen where it is possible to enter text and the



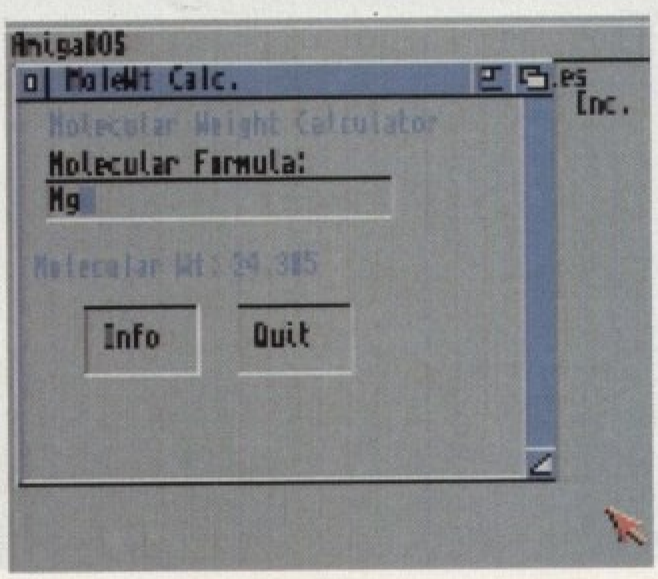

colour of the strips themselves.

From there, install on a disk and when used next, it will flash up the desired text. This useful for sending messages and instructions to friends on disk or simply to make the front end of a game look more attractive to the eye.

The only downer is the lack of hard disk installation but as the Boot Intro Construction Set stands, it's a effective piece of software.

### Molecular Weight Calculator

A brief review here – MWC is a program that accepts a chemical formula and returns the molecular weight. It works and if you're a scientist or anybody else with a desperate need for weighing molecules then many a merry evening




*A molecular weight calculator. What does Mg stand for? Answers on a postcard and remember it's just for fun...*

can be spent with this smooth operator. Overall if the Holmes Bros can keep this standard up over the next few months then Amiga disk magazine is well worthy of investment on a regular basis.

With its professionalism, fun and real value for money, Amiga 3 is a must buy.

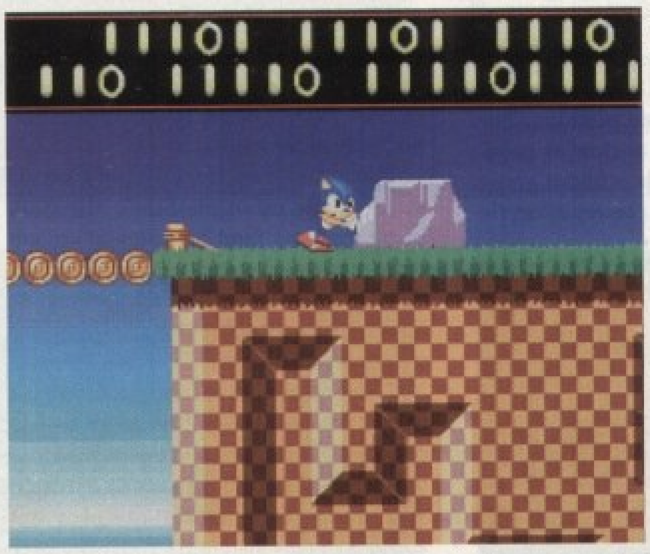
# Sonic

## Virus Free PD

Exclusive! Sonic the Hedgehog is making his debut in the Amiga PD. Well, so it's not true, the reality of the situation is that this is a non-playable demo showing Sonic strutting his stuff on the Commodore.

The results, while not up to the Mega Drive standards, show the game could most likely be well implemented on your favourite computer but let's face it, unless someone, somewhere out there in the big world fancies a huge lawsuit and court case with Sega on their doorstep then it ain't never gonna happen.

The disk is worth getting for novelty value and the speed of Sonic's movement alone, but it'll only keep your interest for a couple of minutes.



*The fully playable, pant-splitting mega game... not*

# The Beginning of the Earth

## Pathfinder PD

Designed as a children's educational program, this title is a slide show tracing the origins of the big bang and the subsequent forming and creation of the planet and its wildlife.

There are about 20 slides in all containing information and reasonable looking pictures of what happened all those millions of years ago.

By the end of the show, which doesn't last for very long, I wanted to see more which is a good sign but I hope the publishers intend to release more disks in a bundle package which go into more depth.

If you have children or indeed if you're a kid and are interested in the planet and dinosaurs then take a look at this.

# Contact addresses

Pathfinder PD
41 Marion Street, Bingley BD16 4NQ
Tel: 0274 565205

Virus Free PD
31 Faringdon Road, Swindon SN1 5AR
Tel: 0793 512321

Holmes Brothers
23 Rocester Avenue, Wednesfield
Wolverhampton WV11 3AU
Tel: 0902 733418

# NO FRILLS - NO GIMMICKS - JUST GREAT PD - WYSIWYG!!

## GAMES

[illegible]

- ☐ G88 **AMIGAMAN GAMES** 10 games
- ☐ G90 **SHAPES** Very playable for kids
- ☐ G91 **GO LOOLY** S.E.U. Good graphix
- ☐ G92 **STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION**
- ☐ G93 **BLOCKIT** Good graphix – Ace
- ☐ G94 **HACK** Text adv
- ☐ G95 **DRAGON TILES** Great tiles game
- ☐ G96 **BOARD GAMES**
- ☐ G97 **ATIK ATAK** C64 game
- ☐ G99 **BART SIMPSON** Scrolling S.E.U.
- ☐ G124 **PIPE RIDER** Space Invader S.E.U.
- ☐ G125 **RAMIFY** Pairing
- ☐ G126 **RUSH HOUR** Frogger – Get across the road
- ☐ G127 **TOMTESPELET** Speed ball type
- ☐ G129 **WET BEAVER GAMES** Pong
- ☐ G130 **WIZARD WORLD** S.E.U. Platform
- ☐ G131 **WORLD OF FOOLS** S.E.U. collection – Excellent
- ☐ G133 **CARD SHARP** 5 card games
- ☐ G134 **TOTAL WAR** Risk type
- ☐ G135 **AIRMANIA** Platform
- ☐ G136 **SKYFLYER** WWII S.E.U.
- ☐ G137 **PUGGLES** Q'bert brill
- ☐ G138 **SQUATS REVENGE** Wolf clone
- ☐ G139 **PAIR IT** Shapes
- ☐ G140 **GAMES COMPILATION I** 6 games
- ☐ G141 **ATLANTIS I** Strategy
- ☐ G142 **NAPOLEONIC WAR SIMULATION** Strategy
- ☐ G143 **MISSION RAID PART II** S.E.U.
- ☐ G144 **SNAKES & LADDERS** Good
- ☐ G145 **GAMES GALORE VOL 7** For the young
- ☐ G146 **AIR WARRIOR** Flight simulation
- ☐ G151 **E-TYPE** Arcade S.E.U.
- ☐ G152 **DUNGEONS OF NADROJ** Hacktype
- ☐ G153 **QUICK & SILVER** Platform. Excellent
- ☐ G154 **MASTER OF THE TOWN** Shoot the sign posts
- ☐ G156 **ETHOS** Text adv + pics
- ☐ G157 **BATTLE CARS** 3D cars S.E.U.
- ☐ G158 **CHALLENGER** Quiz - 5 player
- ☐ G182 **CATACOMB** Graphic adv – very well done
- ☐ G183 **KINGDOM AT WAR** War games
- ☐ G184 **SMASH TV RIPOFF** S.E.U. Futuristic
- ☐ G185 **DOODY** Mario type platform
- ☐ G186 **PICK OUT** Pair it. V. good
- ☐ G187 **NU-SHOOT EM UP** Space
- ☐ G188 **SOLID QUAD** * Racing – Fab!
- ☐ G189 **STRIKE BALL** Baseball. Brill!
- ☐ G190 **PARAGON** Marble Slide
- ☐ G192 **CRAZY SUE** Platform. 1st rate
- ☐ G193 **HENRY IN PANIC** Manic Miner – very addictive
- ☐ G194 **CONCENTRATION V3.3** Pair it – amazing graphix
- ☐ G195 **DESTINATION MOONBASE** Thrust
- ☐ G196 **ESCAPE FROM JOVI III** Caves
- ☐ G197 **NO MANS LAND** War S.E.U.
- ☐ G198 **DOMINOES** V. Good
- ☐ G199 **RAPHAELS REVENGE** Turtle S.E.U.
- ☐ G200 **MIDNIGHT THIEF GAME** Adv
- ☐ G201 **LAMER GAME** Wolftype shoot the beasties
- ☐ G202 **LETTRIX** Shapes with time limit
- ☐ G204 **GRUB GRABBER II** Help Elvis! Avoid gremlis
- ☐ G205 **SWORD OF WORLOCK** 3 disk Adv.
- ☐ G206 **A NIGHT AT THE TOP** Terrorist adv
- ☐ G207 **NIGHT AT THE TOWN** Text adv
- ☐ G208 **QUADRIX** Puzz. Excellent
- ☐ G209 **YUM YUM** * Pacman
- ☐ G210 **REVENGE MUTANT CAMELS** S.E.U.
- ☐ G211 **BATTLEMENTS** Hunchback platform
- ☐ G212 **LEMMINGOIDS** Blast them!
- ☐ G217 **WEIRD IN EDGEWAYS** Puzzle
- ☐ G218 **KARATE WORM** Platform-cute
- ☐ G219 **SNAKE IN THE GRASS** Platform – neat
- ☐ G220 **WAR OF THE FOUR** Graphic adv
- ☐ G221 **WIZARDS DOMAIN** Graphic adv
- ☐ G222 **PIXIE KINGDOM** (2)
- ☐ G223 **ARCADIA** Breakout – very popular
- ☐ G224 **PORK A PORK** Pop the balloons – stop the foxes
- ☐ G225 **MR BRICK** – Mario type
- ☐ G226 **RAID II** S.E.U. – wicked
- ☐ G227 **SERENE II**
- ☐ G228 **WOTSITSNAME** Quiz
- ☐ G229 **TETREN** – tetris
- ☐ G230 **HUMPTY & THE ALIEN INVADERS** Manic Miner
- ☐ G232 **LOTHIAN** Graphic adv
- ☐ G233 **OMEGA RACE** S.E.U. Great
- ☐ G234 **MENTAL IMAGES DISK 2** 3 games
- ☐ G262 **MR & MRS** Young platform – very good
- ☐ G263 **TANX** Great 98%
- ☐ G264 **DEFENDA** Arcade 95% Brilliant conversion
- ☐ G265 **GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR** Mega
- ☐ G266 **NUMBER FUMBLER** Number puzzle
- ☐ G267 **LEMMINGOIDS** Blast away
- ☐ G268 **GROWTH**
- ☐ G269 **SKATE**
- ☐ G270 **PROJECT 1**
- ☐ G271 **LAZER ZONE**
- ☐ G272 **LEMMINGS PACK**
- ☐ G273 **THE MAZE GAME**
- ☐ G274 **SUBCULTURE**
- ☐ G275 **APIDYA**
- ☐ G276 **SHOOT OUT**
- ☐ G277 **SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE**
- ☐ G278 **COMPUTER CONFLICT 2**
- ☐ G279 **ANTEP & SLOT CARS GAME** RPG
- ☐ G280 **TRICKY & THE TURN GAME**
- ☐ G283 **CARD GAMES 2**
- ☐ G285 **MIND GAMES 21**
- ☐ G286 **HYPER TEXT CHEATS**
- ☐ G287 **TECHNOBAN** Puzzle game
- ☐ G288 **LORD OF HOSTS**
- ☐ G289 **THE BEAST** Mission to kill
- ☐ G290 **NADILOT RUN** Cat & dog chase
- ☐ G291 **OUCH** Clobber those moles
- ☐ G292 **ABSOLUTE ADV VOL ONE**
- ☐ G293 **CHAOS STRIKES BACK** Maps etc
- ☐ G294 **GAME TAMER V3.0**
- ☐ G302 **AMOS CRICKET** Good cricket game
- ☐ G303 **ARAZNAX** 40 levels
- ☐ G304 **HELL ZONE** Elite
- ☐ G305 **FATAL MISSION** Good shoot 'em up
- ☐ G306 **GHOSTSHIP**
- ☐ G307 **CROSSMAZE/CRYPTO KING** Words
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- [illegible] EAT MINES 10
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 1
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 2
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 3
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 5
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 6
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 7
- [illegible] NO ONE MINES 8
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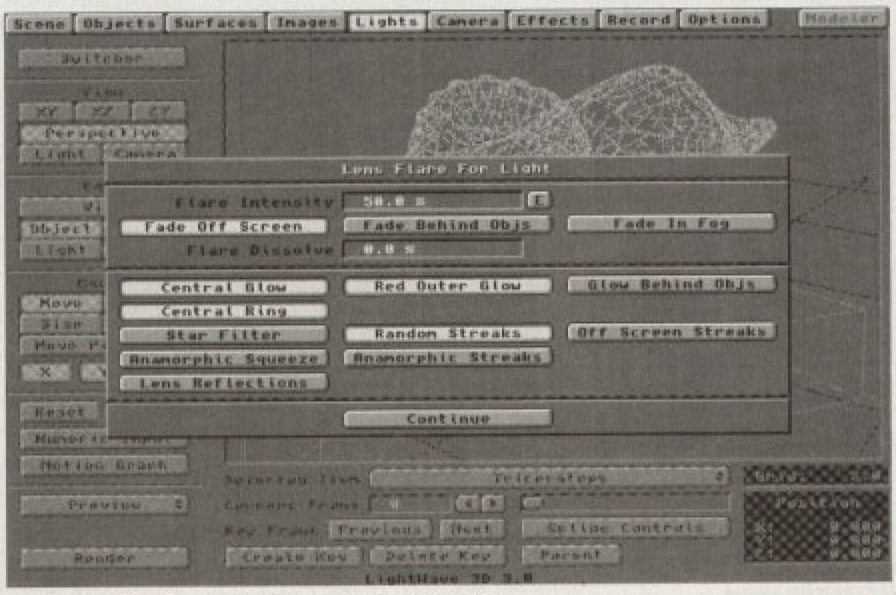
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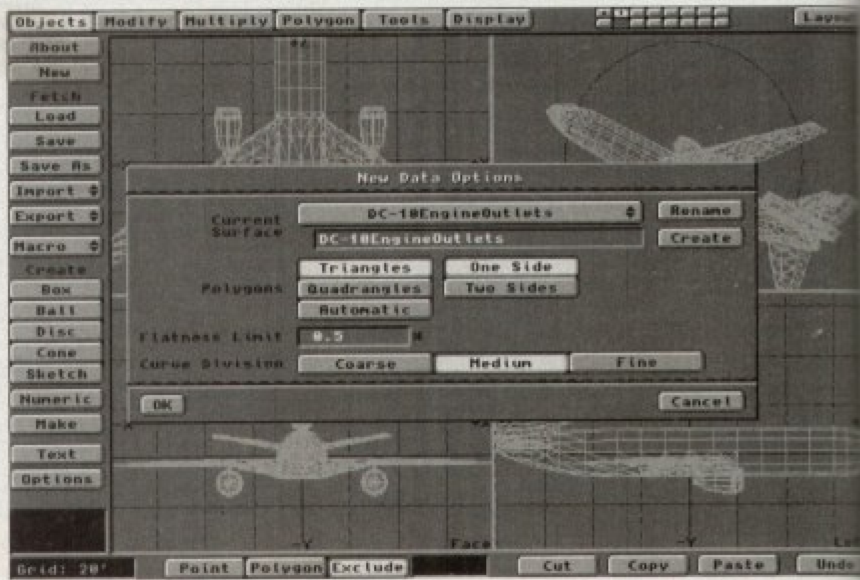
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# Trippin' the Light

**Paul Austin reveals another exclusive as LightRave finally brings arguably the Amiga's greatest ever ray tracer to Europe**

If you're relatively new to the Amiga, the importance of the Video Toaster and its accompanying suite of software can't be overstated. In short, the Video Toaster is the only thing that's kept the Amiga alive in the US for years.

Even more ironic than the prospect of a third party peripheral keeping a computer afloat is the fact that the software bundled with the Toaster is the only thing that's kept the card itself from a pedal bin already full of long forgotten third-party peripherals.

If you managed to follow any of the above the upshot is that without Lightwave the Amiga would probably have been crushed underfoot by the relentless onslaught of IBM in the American market long ago.

## NOT ALONE

Although Lightwave is not alone when it comes to Toaster software, it's widely regarded as the most important element of the entire hardware/software combination.

Due to the Toaster's strictly composite-only output, the card itself has been rather superseded over recent years by dedicated broadcast systems when it comes to TV and satellite – although it is still the workhorse behind countless US cable stations providing character generation, digital video effects and of course Lightwave images and animation.

Although the Toaster itself is no longer considered sufficient for broadcast applications Lightwave still provides rendering quality on a par with anything on the market.

A perfect illustration of this can be seen gracing our screens right now in the form of Babylon 5 and Sea Quest DSV – both of which make extensive use of Lightwave's incredible modelling power.

To put things into perspective Lightwave has proved so popular with professional broadcasters in the States that complete toaster systems have been bought purely as a means of accessing the potential of the package – as a result the Toaster itself probably qualifies as the world's most expensive dongle.

Although this may sound unbelievable it's worth bearing in mind the cost of alternative systems like the Silicon Graphics Indigo workstations. Although truly impressive, the machines can cost up to £35,000 plus another £40,000 for the associated ray tracing and animation software – add an optional £2,000 a year for tech support and upgrades and you'll see why Lightwave remains so popular.

With the extra appeal of the software over its accompanying hardware, the question has to be: Why not buy a stand-alone version of Lightwave and leave the Toaster for those who specifically want its additional multimedia abilities.

Unfortunately as you've probably guessed the connection between the Toaster and Lightwave isn't simply a matter of loyalty. In fact Lightwave minus the Toaster equals no Lightwave whatsoever...

As a consequence that's why the ultimate in Amiga ray tracing has never appeared in Europe. Thanks to the enforced symbiosis it has remained strictly on the wrong side of the pond.

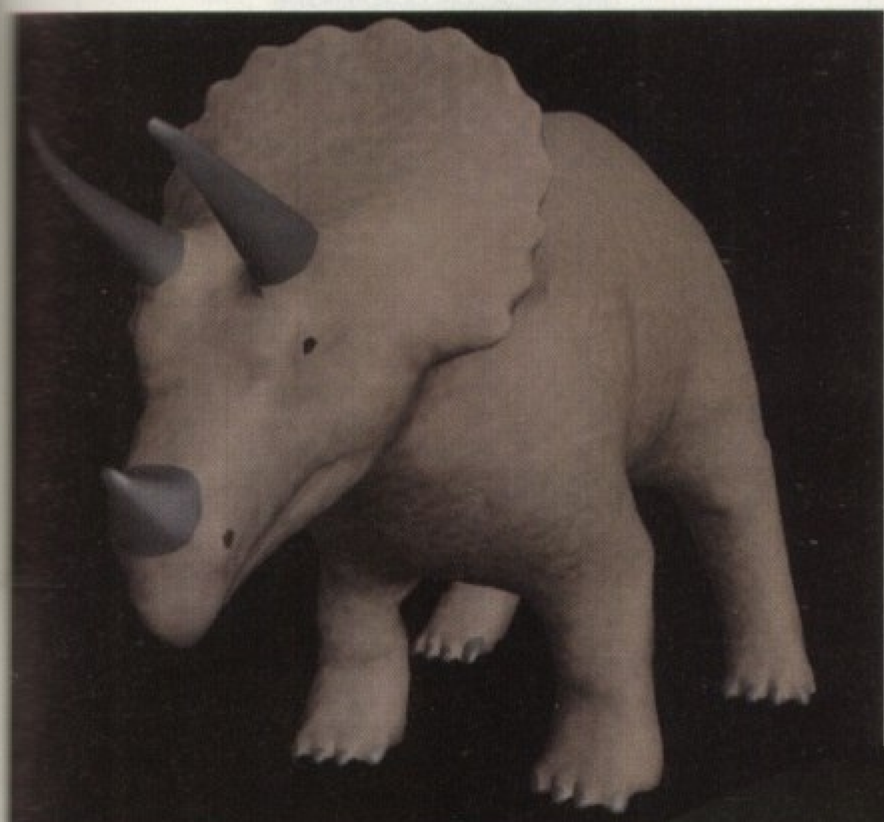
Due to the basic design of Lightwave it insists on the presence of a Toaster – which is not only expensive but also impossible to use in a PAL environment up until recently. Why the authors of Lightwave never released the package fo other boards is probably a matter of con tractual obligation rather than indifferenc but whatever the reason the end resu remains the same.

What Europe needed was some way o duping Lightwave into believing a Toaste was on-board, when in fact it wasn' Enter LightRave, the dongle that does th impossible and brings Lightwave to th PAL Amiga without burning up extr cash on the somewhat mediocre an expensive talents of the PAL Toaster.

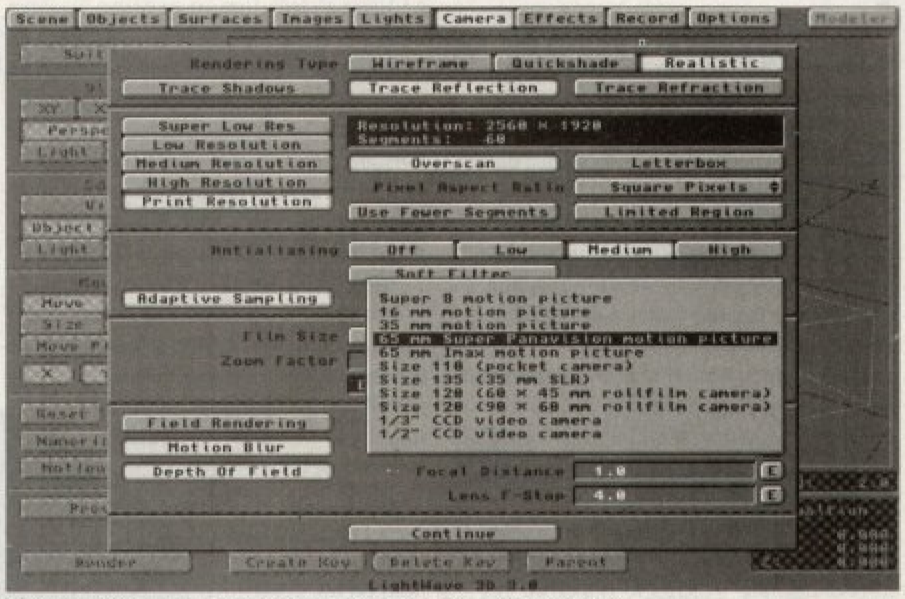
## GRATIFYING

Considering the asking price associate with the LightRave and Lightwave comb nation it's gratifying to know there's mor to it than just plugging the dongle into th serial port.

Along with the aforementioned plast accessory – which for some bizarre reaso smells of soap – you also receive a flopp which contains the LightRave control sof ware, an element which must be reside before you can enter the wonderful worl of Lightwave. In addition to the dong



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and its accompanying software the only other essential is Workbench 2.04 or above and at least 512k or chip and fast RAM respectively – although at least 3Mb or more is required to achieve any real functionality.

Thanks to the control software the output of the program isn't just destined for the hard disk – in fact thanks to LightRave, Lightwave is no longer limited to the composite only output offered by the Toaster as the program's output is now automatically redirected to the board or Amiga display of your choice.

In fact thanks to the intervention of the control software Lightwave will now render direct to the IV24, Retina, Opalvision, DCTV, Firecracker and EGS Spectrum in addition to standard and AGA Amiga displays.

Depending on your particular set-up you can configure Lightwave's preview output medium of your choice, although for optimum speed it's also possible to forego the preview entirely in order to save a little more rendering time.

If the assorted graphic cards and Amiga modes are not enough LightRave also offers the option to render direct to GVP's ImageFX image processing software. This has two advantages. Firstly you can take advantage of any additional display devices supported either now or in the future by the software.

In addition the option also allows post-processing of the 3D images even before the file is saved to disk. On the down-side, running Lightwave and ImageFX simultaneously will require a huge amount of free RAM which will no doubt negate its use for the vast majority.

In addition to simply slapping graphics onto the chosen device, the LightRave software also provides time-out control for the static image preview. Better still it's even possible to play back animation rendered directly from LightRave – a feature only previously available through the Toaster 4000 hardware.

At the moment anim5 is the only anim format available but others are promised for the future. The animation itself can appear as either Ham or Ham8 display or alternatively as a DCTV 3 or 4 bitplane image/anim.

With such a big build up, it's only fair to offer at least a whistle stop tour of what all the fuss is about. However as you can probably guess, Lightwave is simply too big a package to cover in just a couple of pages.

In addition *AC* – unlike certain magazines – has a tradition of not only actual having a product before reviewing it, but also thoroughly testing it prior to offering a so-called exclusive.

With this in mind coverage of Lightwave will be carried onto next month in the form of a full and in-depth look at the package. For now, however, we'll go on a brief guided tour and spotlight what makes the package so special.

Aside from the impressive features list which we'll look at in a moment one of the most notable aspects of the Lightwave and LightRave combination has to be the price tag which when both elements are combined add up to a rather terrifying amount. Obviously without proper testing it's inappropriate to talk about value for money – you'll have to wait for next month for that. However the price tag does at least point to the market the new duet will be targeting.

## SERIOUS

In fact, even to install Lighters and more importantly Lightwave you will either need to be very serious about your modelling and animation or have an almost unbelievable excess of disposable cash.

According to the LightRave manual the software and dongle require the complete installation of the entire Toaster software collection. OK, not an unreasonable request – until you realise that the collection comes on 45 disks which in total require 110Mb of storage space.

If you're unfortunate enough to be installing on an A4000 all 46 disks are required where as only a measly 29 are essential for non-AGA machines.

Due to the rather annoying and archaic design of the Toaster installer you're only given the option to install all or nothing, a factor which is made even more infuriating when you realise that LightRave,

# fantastic

Lightwave and Modeler total to less than 1Mb. In fact even if all the support files, objects and essential fonts are copied over you still only need about 7Mb of hard disk space.

Over the next few weeks I'll try to unearth a more cost-effective method of installation by perhaps aborting installation after the essential Lightwave elements have been added.

Unfortunately even if it is possible to abort the install prematurely the installer interrogates your system before starting-up and will refuse to install on anything less than an 80Mb hard disk.

Even if the correct size of disk is located you will be instructed to delete a predetermined number of files to make up the shortfall. As a result at the moment the only option is to back-up your entire hard disk, install the software, delete the necessary Toaster software and re-install you system.

In addition to the potential problem of acquiring the extra hard disk space the authors and creators of the LightRave dongle have also officially stated – again via the manual – that tech support and imminent free upgrades to the LightRave driver software will only be available to those who can prove ownership of a Toaster.

## UPGRADES

In order to do this the registration card has an area marked Video Toaster serial number. If you do not supply the number you also won't receive information on upgrades to LightRave dongle – which may occur due to upgrades to Lightwave or the Toaster itself.

Although this isn't the kind of news the European buying public are looking for it's probably a vain attempt on the part of LightRave's developers to appease the great god NewTek – who for obvious reasons won't be too pleased at the prospect of losing their prize milk-cow to an interloper.

In fact, so keen are Warm and Fuzzy Logic to avoid offence that one of the primary selling points of LightRave is to offer additional freedom to existing Toaster users.

This indeed is one of the benefits of the LightRave system, however telling a customer that he or she can't have tech support and upgrades for something you've sold them simply because they don't own the very thing you've allowed them to avoid buying is the ultimate in hypocrisy.

And don't think the fault lies with Warm and Fuzzy Logic – it doesn't. The cause of all this confusion falls squarely at the feet of NewTek who through outright greed have forced would-be Lightwave users to such bizarre lengths.

Given the fact that NewTek must have made an ab-solute mint on the Toaster in recent years, why not release Lightwave – under licence – for use with other boards? That way they still receive a handsome royalty and we the underprivileged Europeans would finally get the software we want – no strings attached.

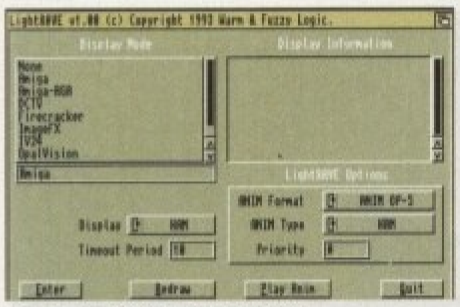
Although the word Lightwave gives the impression of a single entity the package is in fact split into two distinct parts, namely Layout and Modeler – Uncle Sam's spelling, not ours.

On entering the software you arrive at the layout screen complete with its mandatory camera and Caligari style Cartesian plane, providing the essential feeling of perspective.

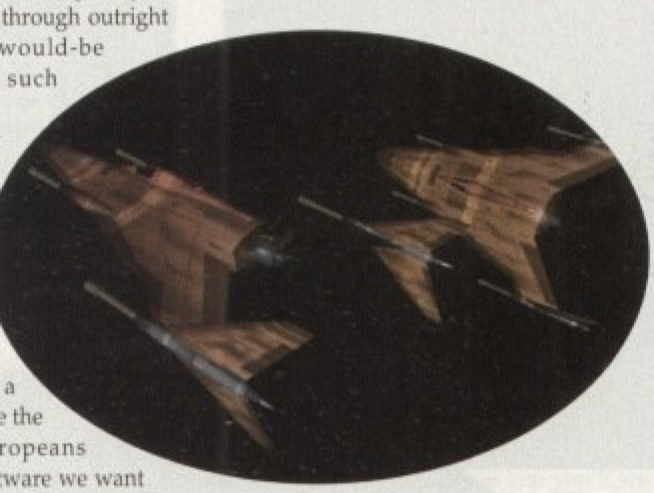
Again Caligari-esque double button mouse controls allow the viewer to zoom in and orientate the display, however this basic perspective view is only the beginning of the program's truly excellent interface.

As you can no doubt see from the screenshots, buttons are also available for the usual X,Y and Z views, but better still you can also view the scene from the camera's point of view or that of any lights which may have been add to the scene.

The beauty of the last two options is only really revealed when the chosen view is combined with the programs edit options. Again you'll see that the various View buttons are repeated in the edit section with the addition of bones and objects.



Simple but effective, the LightRave interface in all its glory



A simple frame from a stunning demo animation

As a result you can for example select the view point of a light and also select the same light as the element to be edited. As a consequence, when you now orientate your new view the object mimics the chances in real-time allowing incredibly easy and accurate adjustment and alignment of the various elements.

If you're happy with the changes you simply click on create key and the alterations are recorded. Each element has its own set of keys which during animation are tweened automatically by the software using splines.

And joy of joys, each object also has its own motion graph to control speed along its individual path. In a rather dramatic and pleasant variation from the norm, characterisation of the various elements within a scene are handled during scene development, and as a result there's no need to jump between modeller and layout to adjust texture maps, backdrops and so on.

Moving on to the layout screen, where you're confronted with an imagine/Real Classic-style tri or quad view depending on your particular preference. In a slight break from tradition, the various edit controls on the left of the screen evolve according to choice of mode selected at the top.

As a result there're no tedious treks through pull-down menus to find the appropriate feature and perhaps more importantly screen refresh is kept to an absolute minimum.

When it comes to model design and handling, the format is very similar to Imagine/Real Classic with the only major exception being the ability to use multiple layers each of which can hold different objects.

These layers can then be freely exchanged to update the screen with a new object and more importantly layers can interact to perform various merge and Boolean operations with one object being used as a cutting tool on another. Although not essential, the optional quad view has a particularly nice touch in the form of a fourth perspective view.

Unlike Imagine you're not forced to use sliders to orientate the fourth window – in fact you can grab the object and manipulate the model in real-time, and if that's not enough you can even choose to have the object constantly swivel from left to right to enhance the 3D effect.

As for tools and edit options, the available selection is nothing short of breathtaking with seemingly everything that Imagine 3.0 promise and seemingly all that Real3D v2 provides at present – with the only possible exceptions being collision detection and gravitational effects.

Although a rather sweeping statement considering my limited exposure to the package it only proves the infectious enthusiasm that Lightwave generates.

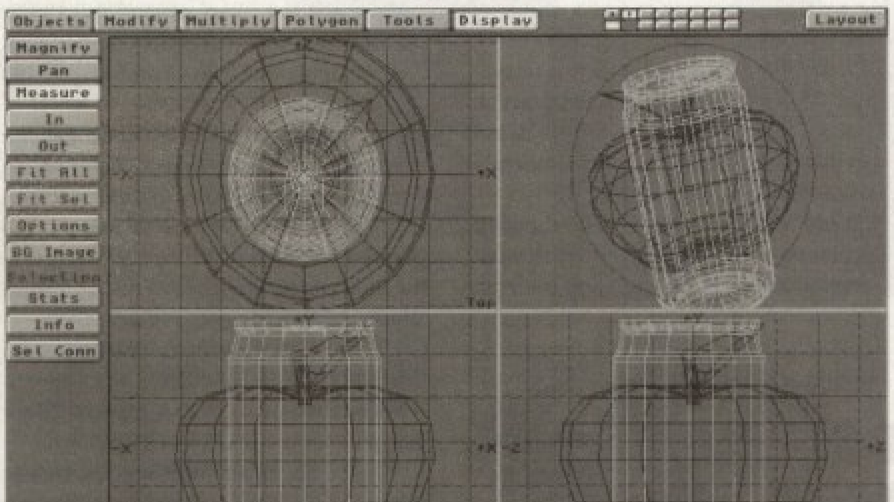
## MASSIVE

It's by no means an accident that Lightwave has become massive right across the US and beyond. Although several years of ray tracing experience do help, I've hardly ever needed to resort to the manual for advice – even when exploring features that are totally new to me.

During Amiga reviews, the phrase intuitive is used with gay abandon – sometimes without cause. In the case of Lightwave 3.0 the word couldn't be more at home. Nine times out of ten using a new feature is simply a matter of picking the most obvious approach – and nine times out of ten you'll be right.

Like many Amiga enthusiasts I've become thoroughly sick of the sycophantic coverage that the Toaster and Lightwave have received over the years in many European magazines – given the fact that none of them have ever even seen it in action.

However after only a brief exposure to this package I'm already hooked. Tune in next month for the in-depth review. By then my initial rush of enthusiasm should have worn off and we'll reveal if all of the expense and hassle is worth the effort. AC




Modeler multi-layers in action

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# Expand and deliver

**Automatic Jpeg compression and expansion courtesy of Pegger. Paul Austin reveals the graphics utility no Amiga artist should be without**

Although the Jpeg file format has brought unrivalled image compression to the hard pressed Amiga, it's largely remained the domain of power users with the financial muscle to afford expensive Jpeg compatible software such as ADPro, ImageFX and ImageMaster.

With the arrival of the AGA chipset the battle between space and quality did improve, however even with the assistance of Hi-res interlaced Ham8's some quality is still sacrificed for a space saving of roughly 50 per cent over the average IFF 24.

In addition to expense associated with Jpeg, accessibility was and still remains a problem with the vast majority only accepting 24-bit data in an IFF form.

Once again the need for expensive image processing software is reaffirmed with its inevitable demands on system resources and time – as each Jpeg is forced through the sometimes lengthy processing procedure every time an image was stored or decompressed.

Thankfully Pegger should finally put both the financial and time constraints associated with Jpeg to the sword, thanks to a degree of automation which is unsurpassed by any other Amiga graphics utility.

Like the majority of recent releases, Workbench 2.0 or above is an essential for anyone planning to use Pegger. In addition at least 2Mb of RAM are required, along with a hard disk.

The need for Workbench 2 is soon apparent on boot-up as the program leaps into action with three AppIcons offering compression, decompression and the essential snoop. For those unfamiliar with the term AppIcon it simply means that the program waits in the background while a small window remains on the Workbench screen ready to be double clicked into life or fire up automatically as files are dropped over the icon.

Unfortunately the version on test did show the odd bug when it came to dumping files directly onto the icon, however a bug fix is promised prior to shipping in the UK.

Whether you prefer to double click or drop, the end result is much the same with the main program screen opening ready to accept various details concerning the name, format and placement of the file or files in question.

## DIRECTORIES

In the case of both compression and expansion, source and target directories are defined, a rename applied and the compression ratio or decompressed file format specified.

Although this sounds a lengthy process, 90 per cent of the information is added by a series of pop-up requesters necessitating simple point and click decision making.

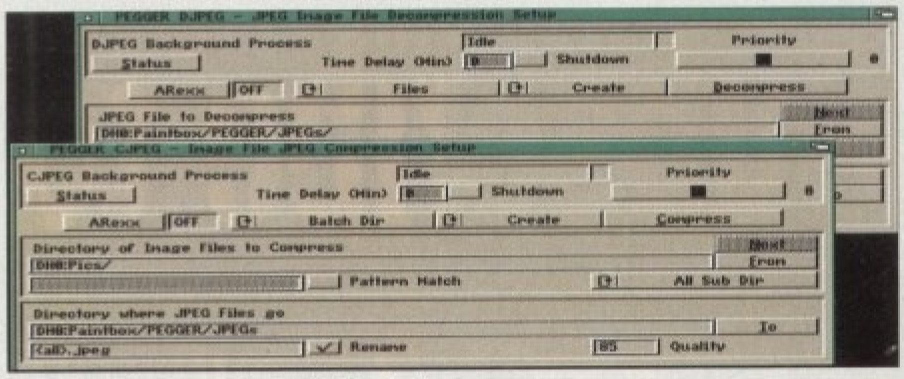
Like most file intensive software, pattern matching is well supported in addition to fairly extensive ARexx support. As for the processing options, you're given the opportunity to process either individual preselected files or batch process complete directories – with the options to include sub directories.

Once defined, another click initiates processing with the end results being created in addition to the original file or as a direct replacement. Thankfully file replacement is far more subtle than simply loading converting and overwriting the original file within its parent directory.

In fact, Replace will even delete the original file while copying the newly compressed Jpeg into a completely different directory – adding a new name or appenda in the process. In the case of compression this will obviously mean Jpeg files, however when it comes to decompression the end results can be either DCTV 3/4 – with or without an optional filtering, IFF 24s, Ham8s or the Video Toasters very own Framestore format.

Regardless of which direction the file is heading, the aforementioned pattern matching can be employed to filter the wheat from the chaff while optional smoothing can be applied to decompressed Jpegs if necessary.

Although both standalone elements offer relatively painless file processing, there's a distinct lack of automation as at least some input is still required from the user whether compression or decompacting is required.




*Single files or batch processing couldn't be simpler*

Fortunately the third AppIcon in the Pegger collection provides the ability to assign automatic processing to specific directories. As a result any software can load Jpeg files regardless of whether the package supports the format.

Better still, the same software will now also have developed the ability to write Jpeg files. In truth the software is exactly as before, but thanks to Snoop set-up, Pegger will now keep a constant watch on a predefined compression directory.

## INTERCEPTED

As a result any IFF 24s heading for this directory will be intercepted by Pegger and automatically compressed with to a predefined ratio and saved out with the appropriate file appenda.

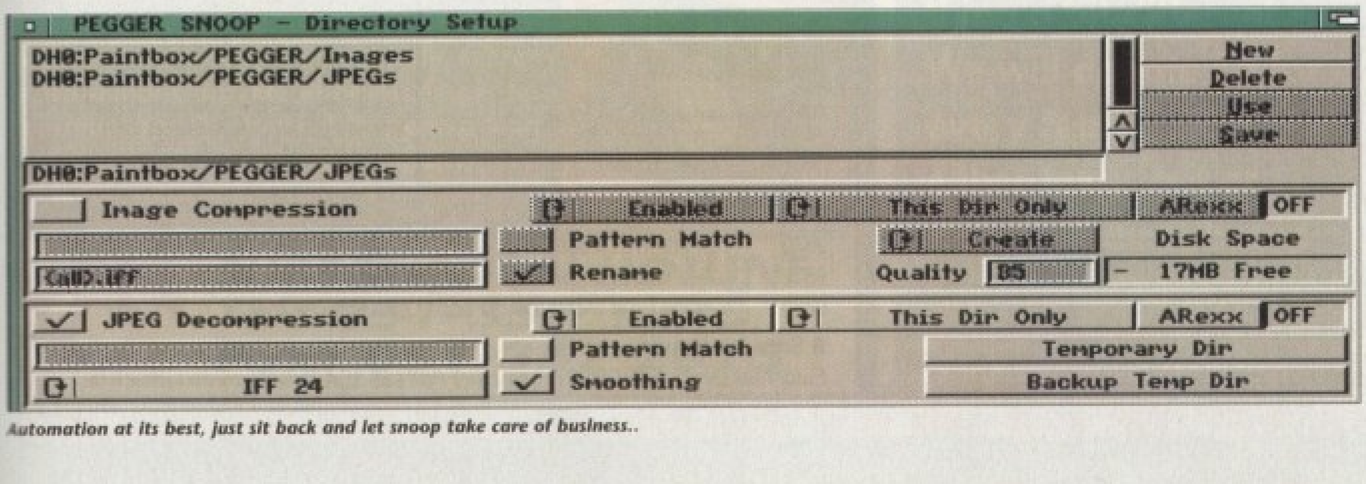
As for decompression, the format is pretty similar, with Pegger jumping in to convert a Jpeg into any one of the formats mentioned above whenever a file is requested – regardless of which package is trying to load the file.

It's even possible to assign the automatic compression and decompression to the same directory. As a result programs like Imagine could save 24 bits to the directory – which would then be intercepted and converted to Jpegs – while DPaint could load the newly created Jpeg file, at which point Pegger would intercept once more transforming the Jpeg to a Ham8, DCTV or IFF 24.

Aside from a brief pause during the conversion process, Pegger's intervention is completely transparent. And courtesy of its fairly minimal system requirements it can be left in the background to convert the output of ray tracers and modellers automatically.

As for a final analysis, it's hard to complain about a unique package which offers a fast and reliable cure for the problem of 24-bit storage. Aside form the slight bug which is already under repair Pegger is the ideal utility for the Amiga's 24-bit generation of artists and animators.




*Automation at its best, just sit back and let snoop take care of business..*

**Product: Pegger**
**Supplier: Ramiga International**
**Price: £75.95**
**Tel: 0782 398840**

**Ease of use: 8**
**Implementation: 8**
**Value for money: 6**
**Overall: 7**

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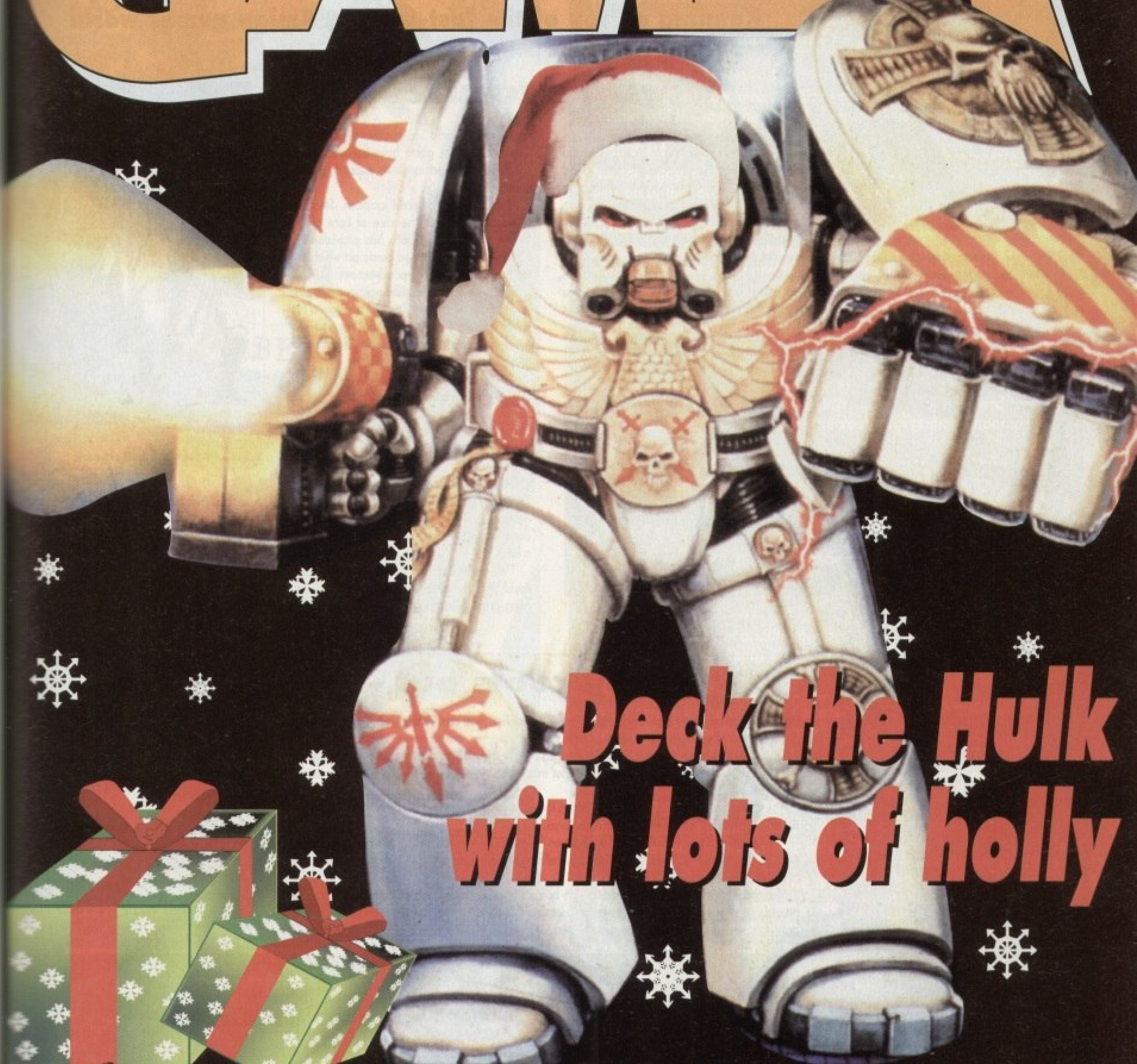
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# Gamer GLOBE

**Keeping on top of the fast-moving Amiga games world**



## Viva revolution!

It has taken the combined talents of a top comic book author and award-winning artist, and a leading development team responsible for a revolutionary and critically acclaimed adventure, to create Virgin's Beneath a Steel Sky.

Dave Gibbons of Watchmen and Batman vs Predator fame, and Revolution, the people behind the innovative Lure of the Temptress, are the two talents concerned, and are jointly responsible for the world's first computer-based animated comic book adventure.

Revolution have rewritten the virtual theatre engine used to drive Lure of the Temptress. As a result, Beneath a Steel Sky's interface is less menu driven and simplicity itself to use. Characters in the game have believable personalities and react to events depending upon the situation.

With over 100 different locations, Steel Sky is more than twice the size of Lure of the Temptress. Dave Gibbons has provided the carefully crafted, digitised comic art which sets the game apart from other adventures.

His decades of experience in the comic book field have helped Revolution create a feel unlike any other adventure. Dave has also written and illustrated a scene-setting comic book to accompany the package.

Dave commented on his link with Virgin's adventure: "I'm always interested in telling stories in words and pictures and Beneath a Steel Sky is like an interactive story with animated pictures. It seems to be a very logical evolution of storytelling."

Said Revolution Director Charles Cecil: "With Beneath a Steel Sky we spent a year designing it before any programming was done. During that year Dave Gibbons taught us a lot.

"We believed that combining our skills could produce something really special, something ground-breaking, and it has. Beneath a Steel Sky incorporates techniques and game-play design that no-one has done before. We're not trying to create reality. We're creating a style."

Beneath a Steel Sky is available now for all 1Mb Amigas, although a special A1200 version is also on the cards.



**Dave Gibbons busy at work on Steel Sky artwork**



**Some of Dave's finished artwork**

## Edutainment Express

Mindscape have just released a new Mario title on the Amiga. Mario is Missing combines the much-loved world of the Super Mario Bros (although Amiga owners won't admit it) with essential educational principles.

Mindscape say that it's a truly interactive video game that enquiring young minds will just love! Yes, despite Mindscape's apparent lack of knowledge about "kids" today, Mario is Missing is designed to help kids aged seven and upward to explore and understand world geography in a fresh, fun and fascinating way.

The evil Bowser has kidnapped Mario and his lizardly henchmen are stealing the world's treasured artefacts. In their quest to rescue the stocky Italian plumber, kids will travel the world, explore exotic locations, learn to master maps, compass directions, follow routes and collect vital clues.

Mario is Missing contains a magical mix of music, animation, 2D and 3D graphics and a feast of interactive photos, facts, maps and data. It provides an excellent introduction to the skills recommended within the National Curriculum for Geography.

You will need a minimum of 1Mb to run Mario is Missing, it'll cost you £29.99 and should be on the shop shelves now.

## Cutey cools out

Cool Spot is in town and according to Virgin he is the coolest, most controllable and slickest animated character ever seen on any computer or console system.

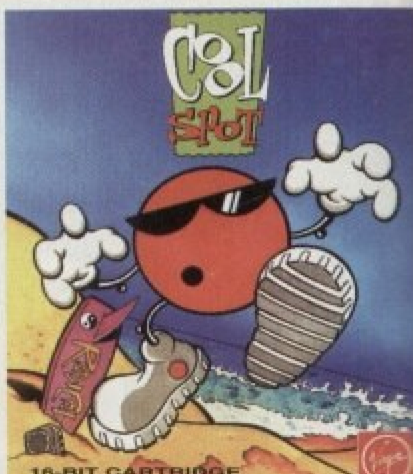
Cool Spot's friends have been caught and caged by a bad dude with a stupid haircut called, ahem Wild Wicked Wily Will. The red and round spot must of course rescue all his chums – cue a cutesy platform romp.

The star of the show walks, runs, leaps, hangs loose, bounces, climbs and still finds time to dust himself down, clean his shades and play with his yo-yo.

The uncool characters that attack Cool Spot on his travels are no less well drawn and animated – hermit crabs that go wild when they lose their shells and manic mice who chuck chalky cheese at the rotund platform hero to mention just two.

The game features 11 stunning levels plus 6 bonus stages set inside a big bottle of fizzy pop. The parallax scrolling scenery is so huge, smooth, detailed and colourful that your eyes will find it hard to believe that they haven't died and gone to heaven.

That's what Virgin reckon anyway, but find out for yourselves, as Cool Spot is out now.







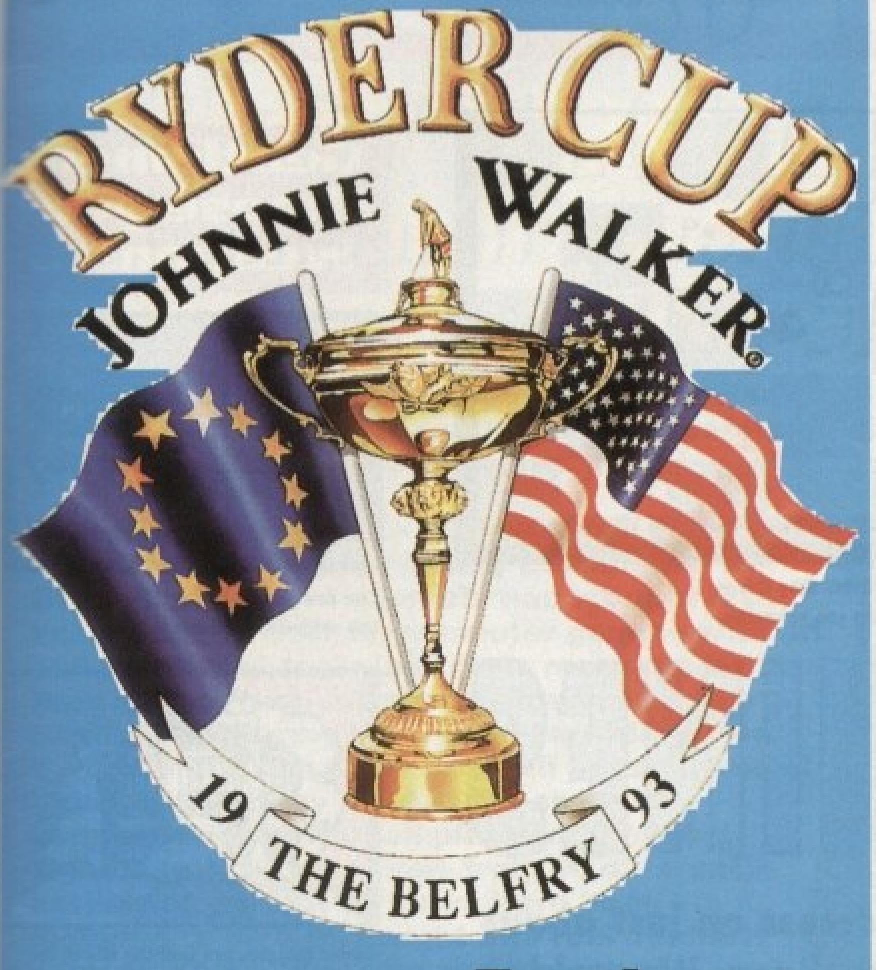
## Going for Gold

US Gold have beaten the industry's top players to win sole rights to produce and distribute worldwide the only official computer game for the 17th Olympic Winter Games Lillehammer 1994 in Norway.

The Birmingham-based firm, part of the CentreGold home entertainment empire, secured this – one of the industry's most sought after contracts – following the success of Olympic Gold, their official game of the Barcelona '92 Summer Olympics, which recently topped £30 million worth of sales.

The new game will be for up to four players and will available in eight languages. It will show full opening and closing ceremonies, authentic course and venue design, three difficulty levels, Olympic/world records, male/female opponents, map screens and animation sequences linking events.

Winter Games '94 will feature ten events including downhill, slalom, super slalom, biathlon, short track, super G, ski jump, bob sleigh and luge. The has a Christmas release date and is expected to be a hot seller throughout 1994, mirroring the success of Olympic Gold.




## Fore!

Ocean are about to tee off with Ryder Cup Golf, the officially licensed game of one of the most famous tournaments on the golfing calendar.

The gameplay is fast and you must skilfully control your team of 12 players to ensure that you get your hands on the esteemed Ryder Cup.

Ryder Cup Golf brings you as close as you can get to the real thing without wearing a colourful jumper and getting very wet. The Gourad graphics are supposed to be so real that you can almost smell the freshly mown grass and hear the rustle of branches in the wind as your ball sweeps smoothly across the 3D landscape.

Realism is ensured using a sophisticated ball control system which allows pinpoint accuracy for every swing. This doesn't mean that play is easy and the three courses are packed full of bunkers and various other tough hazards.

Ryder Cup Golf will arrive on your shop shelves very soon and there will be A1200 and CD32 versions too.

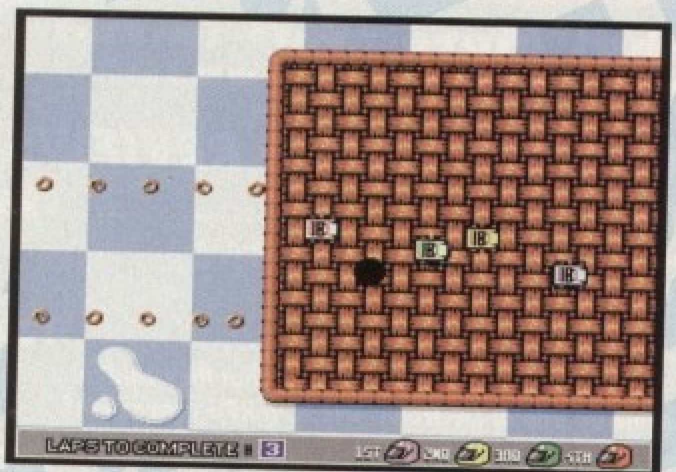
# INNARDS

## Ho-ho-ho! More stuff-in than your Christmas roast

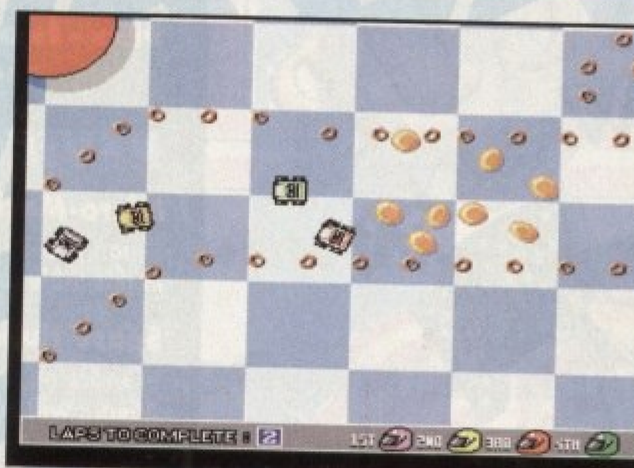
### REVIEWS ● REVIEWS ● REVIEWS



### REGULARS ● REGULARS ● REGULARS




Race around the tablecloth, jump the waffle and be careful not to leave your skidmarks on mum's favourite piece of Gingham




Who says Heinz Buildz Brits? Silly things just get in your way when you're racing

# MICRO MACHINES

## It's been a storming success on just about every console format and now it's making its racing debut on an Amiga near you

Anyone who watches their box to any great extent can't possibly help watching the adverts that accompany your dose of soaps.

Last Christmas one of the many toys to take the British public by storm were the Micro Machines. This range of miniature vehicles were billed as detailed models of the genuine article yet small enough to fit on your little finger.

These days where there's any scope to market a product further, you can bet your bottom dollar that the companies responsible will. Guess what, this is precisely what happened with the Micro range.

They first appeared with jubilant applause on formats like the Sega Mega Drive. Now after a long wait MM has decided to materialise on the Amiga.

Being a product originally designed for formats like the Mega Drive, Micro has a very console style to it. When you first glance at it, Micro Machines looks fairly poor in relation to what the Amiga is capable of.

However, just because the graphics are of a fairly simple nature it doesn't mean to say that the game isn't highly playable. This is definitely the case with this title. The sprites are small and the sound doesn't stretch the Amiga at all, but it is damn playable.

Micro Machines is one of those games that really doesn't have much of a plot or much background; its theme is very simple.

So having to write about it is quite tough. I mean I could sum up the entire scenario in about five words. It's a racing game featuring the Micro Machines (well OK, so it was eight words). But I can't do this because it would be a very blank page and yours truly would be back in the queue with the other millions!

All right, there is slightly more to it than has been mentioned thus far, so without any further digression let's spit it out.

Micro Machines puts you in the tiny driving seat of a wide variety of different miniature vehicles. These vary from power boats through to combat tanks, Formula One Grand Prix cars and helicopters.

Now straight away you're probably jumping to the same conclusion most do, that this is nothing new; a race around the old tarmac in cars and boats viewed from the top.

But this is where you're wrong because the main novelty aspect to Micro Machines are the tracks. Rather than your typical road scenario, the courses are set over such things as breakfast tables, bathtubs, workbenches and porches.

Sounds odd but it works a treat. It's really very entertaining having to guide your dune buggy around a track composed of Rice Krispies, avoiding the beans and trying your hardest not to skid off the table cloth into oblivion. In total there are 27 tracks and they're all made up of as silly things as the above.

As far as who you race against on these cereal (surreal – get it folks?) tracks, there's a full complement of cartoony style characters to choose from.

There are two types of races you can compete in. The first is a four competitor-first-around-the-track affair and the second is a two player head-to-head.

Obviously in both types of race you race against either computer opponents or a chum of your choice.

Really no amount of words will ever be able to justify Micro Machines – the proof is in the playing. It's simple in design, simple in the graphic department, but highly playable and highly addictive.

**SIMON CLAYS**

VISION

AUDIO

DIFFICULTY

LASTABILITY

Micro Machines is one of the few console cross-overs worth getting revved up about for the Amiga. Don't be fooled by its simple appearance, it's really pretty good.

**80%**

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Codemasters |
| Developer ➤ | In house |
| Disks ➤ | 1 |
| Price ➤ | £25.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | N/A |
| Size ➤ | ½ meg |

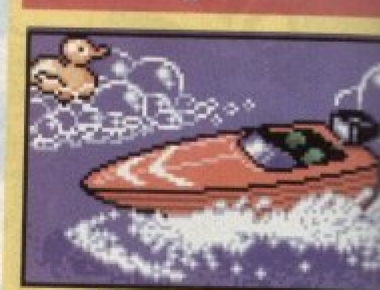



Row, row, row yer boats merrily down the bathtub...




Steer skilfully or you'll bang your nuts and bolts

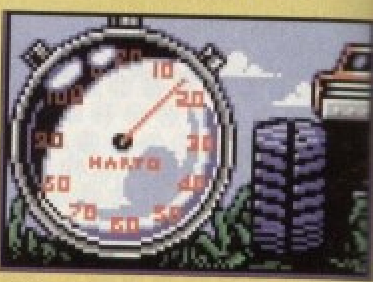
## Gentlemen, choose your weapons...



Fun and frolics in the tub with Power Boats



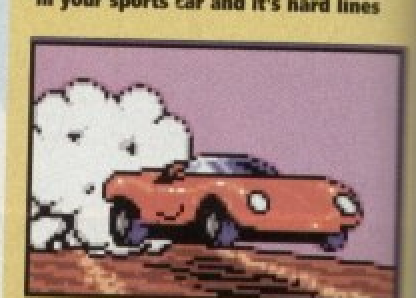
Turbo Buggies are just the ticket for tough terrains like pencil cases



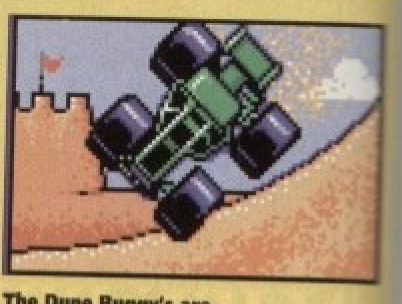
The Ruff Trux will get you through anything



Skid off the track on the school desk in your sports car and it's hard lines



Helicopters are excellent for trimming your Mum's herbaceous borders

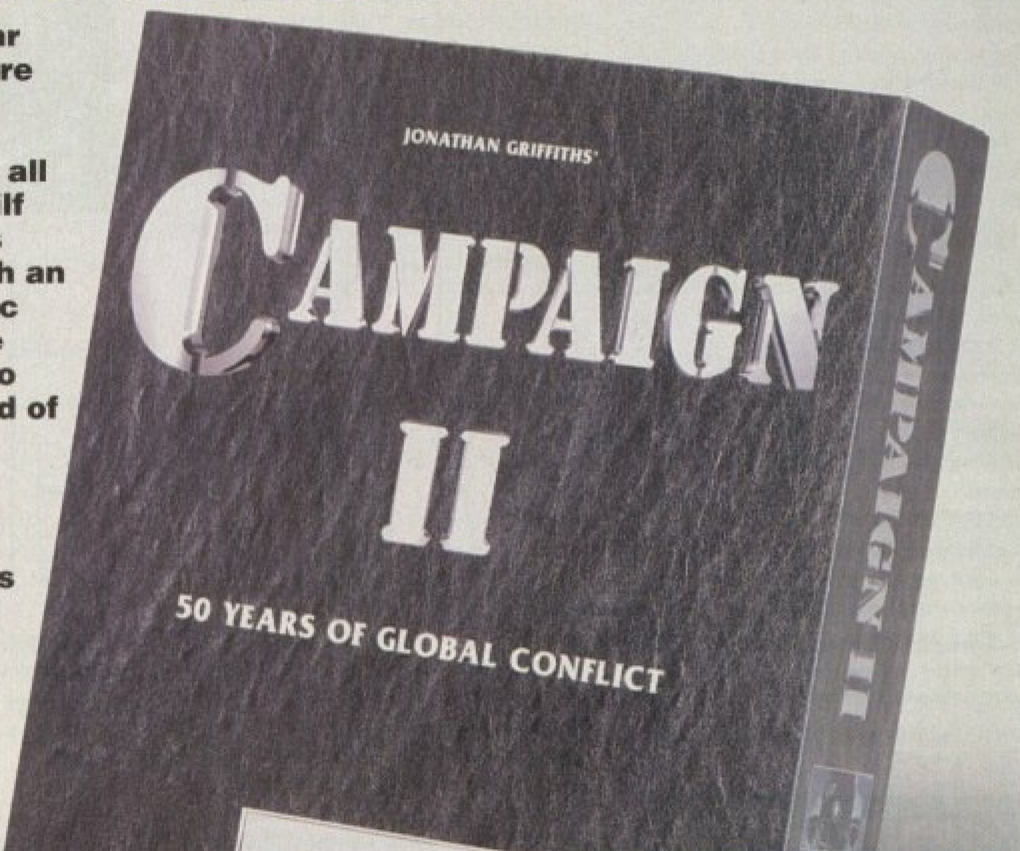


The Dune Buggy's are great when life's a beach

# 50 YEARS OF GLOBAL CONFLICT

## *Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations*

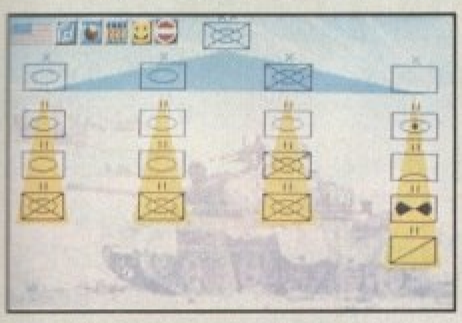
Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations with more depth than ever before and fabulous real-time 3D action.




The depth to Campaign II is provided by the all new strategy. Expert Military consultant, Wilf Owen, from recent conflicts has brought his knowledge to bear on computer gaming with an end result that looks and feels more realistic than ever before. All aspects involved in the running of an army have been considered, so that now you can place yourself in command of either side, at any level in the chain of command. Over 130 templates of the most significant military forces from 56 different nations of the last 50 years have been included to gain an insight into real conflicts such as Korea, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm.

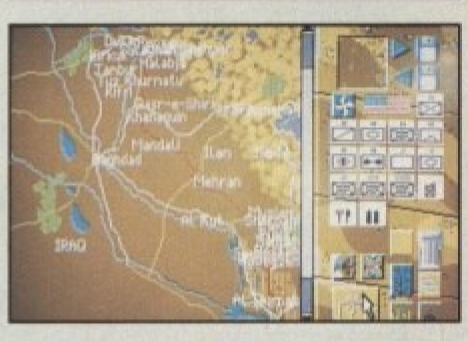
The action takes the form of fast 3D graphics if you choose to enter the battlefield in one of the 152 types of military vehicles. APCs and Mobile Artillery, utilise weapons ranging from wire-guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, and machine-guns supported by laser rangefinders to tracer range-finders, night vision, and gun stabilizers.









- Campaign II has emerged as the most comprehensive simulation with new improved strategy, at any level in the Chain of Command (C.o.C.), closely resembling that of a real military situation.
- Hands-on action as you fly helicopters in air-to-ground or air-to-air attacks.
- Deploy the animated infantry during fierce battlefield action in a new improved 3D environment.
- Featuring all the modern weapons systems: guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, laser rangefinders, gun stabilizers and night sights.

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Meet the Chippend in their se latex body armour

# SPACE HULK



**S**ince Space Hulk drifted its way into the *Gamer* igloo (it's grim this time of year up north), it's received a fair amount of attention.

As we crouched around the fire the other night discussing tactics, I drifted into a slumber and dreamed we were all space marines...

There we were, a lethal squad of terminators aboard the Space Hulk, our mission to destroy the genestealers before deadline.

Our mission briefing commenced, with a morale-boosting message from the emperor, Bloomers:

"After you've carried those boxes over to the silo, I'd like you to infiltrate the Space Hulk and terminate the dreaded enemy."

## BRIEFING

Sitting there, quaking in my oversized Burtons spacesuit, my expression drooped further as our squad leader continued his briefing.

"Right, we've got no choice, it's our job. Anyone who complains I'll personally take out to the fighting tree and beat seven shades out of them, so no whinging, let's get on with it! Any comments?"

From the corner of the room a timid hand slowly broke the line of stooped heads. It was technical officer Colon, trembling as he spoke.

"I think it would be a good idea if we were all a bit quieter..." he stuttered, adjusting his fluorescent shoulder band.

Before anyone could comment he was floored, one fatal blow from hard ex-con Dazza Biggs. I gulped hard and quickly started moving boxes with my *Gamer* colleague Biff.

I don't recall how long we lumped parcels into the silo, but that's dreams for you. Time seemed an impossible quantity to measure, everything became translucent and before I knew it we were assembled at the main entrance to the Hulk.

The hardest, finest set of marines this side of Macclesfield and me. I eyed them one by one, looking into the steely grit of their vacant pupils.

Squad leader Ste-Vee, a veteran with psychopathic tendencies. Big Ozzie, second in command, a huge beast of a man and not to be trifled with. Buttux, a brutal individual with masochistic tendencies towards the young or infirm.

Then came Dazza Biggs, wanted in four separate star systems for felonies against the state. Next in line Choons Morse, who wears a sound system in battle and goes into a blood-letting frenzy to the sound of a bone-crunching piano line. Following him, A-Dum, whose voyeuristic desires had led him to take vid-shots of all the carnage – friend or foe.

As Biff (who's by far the youngest) and myself took our places in line, we exchanged a nervous glance and waited.

## DARK RECESSES

The silence was abruptly broken by the dulcet bark of Ste-Vee.

"Biff, Clays, lead the assault!"

I swallowed hard and nervously cocked the firing pin on my Bolter. Its sound resonated around the Hulk like the drop of the hangman's noose, cold and final.

The doors of the hulk slid open and a cold wind blew at our visors. Simultaneously we both gulped, then stepped forward into the gloomy half light, shaking. Seeing the fright in our petrified eyes the others laughed, and taunted us as we switched to radio contact only.

Amid the noise of the intercom abuse, the others fell back and we explored the dark recesses of the corridor. It smelled, the stench of death lingering on the mouldy walls.

Ahead, a bend in the passage and the prospect of trouble. We don't want to move but we must. Every muscle and fibre in our bodies locked out with tension, telling us not to proceed further, but there's no choice.

The corner looms, the trigger finger shakes nervously and eyes burn into the darkness searching for shapes. Then from nowhere, a screech and it's on you, violating your space. Four clawed arms scratching and tearing with no remorse. We scream but it's to no avail.

A red hue deepens over my sleep and suddenly I'm drawn from Lady Morphine's world, slumped in front of a frosty monitor in the *Gamer* igloo.

Rising to my feet I'm suddenly filled with co and the realisation that this dream has given bi to an introduction which both sets the scene an shows some of the atmosphere that Space Hu generates.

Based loosely on the role-playing game, Spa Hulk is set in a future world, long after man ha developed warp drive and explored the frontiers the void.

The game gets its name from the battlegrou for all the missions, the Space Hulks. These floa ghost ships are the result of cross currents in warp drive which left them trapped.

These abandoned nightmares have long be the bane of the Empire as they have become breeding ground for the Genestealers.

The first thing to say about Space Hulk is it's a very indepth game. In the normal "eager get into the action" fashion I jumped straight one of the mission settings. Needless to say ea campaign lasted about 15 seconds, with all five the Terminators having eaten space vacuum me staring blankly at the screen, listening to haunting loading tune.

Never has it been so imperative to sit do




**Here's your set of likely lads, tooled up to the teeth**

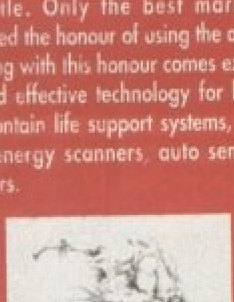
## Gladiators are you ready?



### Terminators

Almost all Marine Chapters have Terminator suits. Usually old, they've been passed down the ages and are covered in the scars of battle. Only the best marines are bestowed the honour of using the armour.

Along with this honour comes extra training and effective technology for battle. All suits contain life support systems, bio-scanners, energy scanners, auto sensors and targeters.



### Genestealers

A horror of teeth and claws, the Genestealer is the perfect biological killer. They know no fear and feel no remorse and have one prime directive; to multiply and survive.

with the manual and study it. In fact, in Space Hulk there are two to peruse and they're well worth a thoroughscan.

The game also contains an in-depth tutorial mode which comprehensively guides you through each aspect of control and tactics.

Basically, it runs off two main screens, both of which are accessed by your favourite pal the mouse. The main screen contains 3D windows of your team and an overhead scanner view.

## CHANGING CURSOR

There are five windows in all, the largest being the central one which normally contains the character you wish to control. This isn't to say that control isn't possible within the four smaller windows, it's just that due to the size, control is easier to instigate in the central one.

Movement and firing within the graphic window is via a cursor which alters depending upon its position within the window. At the edges of the window it moves you in the relative direction to its position and in a more central position it changes into a crosshair and fires your weapon.

Due to the nature of Space Hulk and the speed at which the Genestealers attack, a number of strategical options have been implemented.

Clicking on the right mouse button when the cursor is on the overhead scanner transfers you to a control screen, where team orders can be given. Here icons allow you to order your squad members to move, open and close doors, and most importantly, put down fire.

Another feature is overwatch mode. This adds an extra dimension of intelligence to your team and should be treated as a default mode for moving.

For example, when one of your marines is following your orders and something attacks him, it would be quite natural for him to react – overwatch implements this for you automatically.

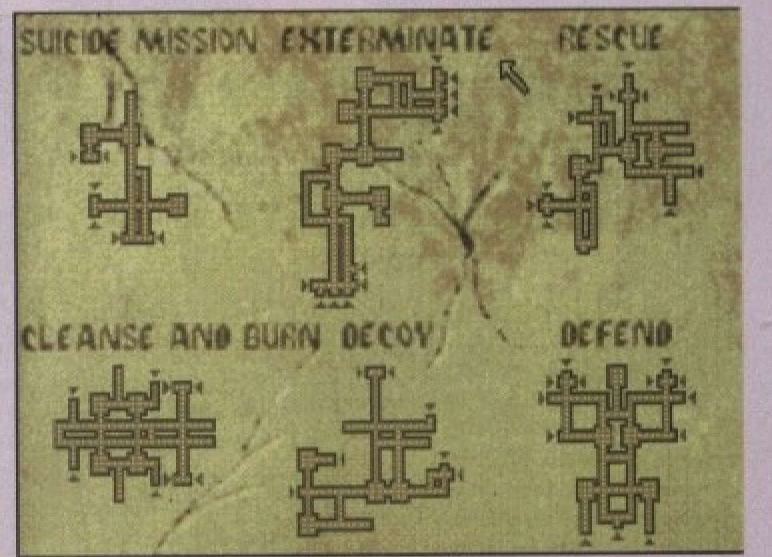
Obviously with five or even ten marines at your disposal, planning and orders can take quite a while, so a freeze time facility is included.

Unfortunately for you, freeze time is limited so you can't take a light year deliberating over strategy. However, the longer you play in real time, the quicker your freeze time builds up again.

Once you've completed the tutorial, there are over 50 missions to pit your wits against, including the ominous Deathwing campaign.

In the Deathwing campaign you can make the decision over which squad to take into battle and which type of weaponry you fancy kitting your Terminators out with.

There are 12 in total and they vary from the rocket-shelled Bolter through to the highly effective Heavy Flamer.




**Here's a set of well dodgy missions**



**Help! There's a Genestealer trying to clip me helmet**

Once you've established how to control Space Hulk, it becomes a fairly atmospheric, addictive title. All right, it drags most of its inspiration from Aliens, but it's for you to decide whether that's a good thing or not.

Most of the Hulks are very similar in style and the graphics aren't that well rendered. However, they're effective enough and coupled with the moody soundtrack give enough of an overall effect.

The main problem with Space Hulk is that it really is difficult. The Genestealers move quicker than Sooty would do if Harry Corbett's hand was cryogenically frozen . This makes for long periods of depression and desperation, until you master how to defeat them effectively.

Far worse though is the amount of disk accessing you have to go through and the fact that the program isn't hard drive installable.

You might think I'm being pedantic, but after the seventh mission failure it starts to grate a little. You've spent a total of 45 seconds getting annihilated and 35 minutes disk swapping to the sound of something off *Scooby Doo*.

This aside though, once you've mastered the control you'll really get into Space Hulk and find it addictively challenging for a long while.

**SIMON CLAYS**

**VISION** — 7/10

**AUDIO** — 7/10

**DIFFICULTY** — 9/10

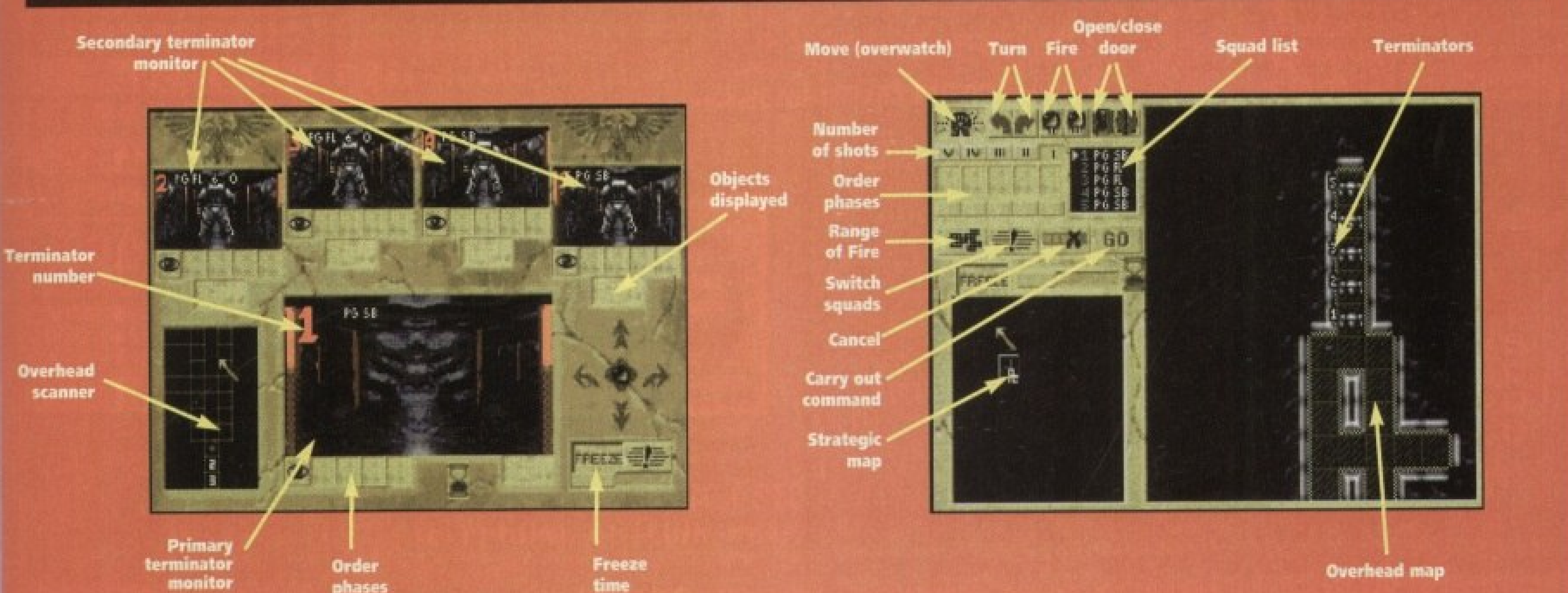
**LASTABILITY** — 8/10

**85%**

Space Hulk might well be a remake of a famous film about Aliens, but it doesn't stop it being a very difficult strategy-cum-3D dungeon-esque title with plenty of action and gripping play.

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Electronic Arts |
| Developer ➤ | In house |
| Disks ➤ | 3 |
| Price ➤ | £34.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | No |
| Size ➤ | 1 meg |

## Those controls in full



Do you remember the early days of computer games? Do you remember a particular wire-framed arcade-cum-pub classic, Asteroids?

There won't be many who haven't seen some or other version of this landmark in the annals of software history. I have vivid memories of entering my local tavern in an attempt to do battle with wire-framed UFOs and the outlines of large chunks of rock.

This was no mean feat as to play my favourite stand-alone piece of high technology, I had to get pass the disconcerting eyes of the landlord.

The lengths to which this reviewer went to as a young man just to satiate his desire for electronic mayhem were quite disturbing.

Preparation would begin some five days before my sticky coinage got anywhere near the slot of the machine. The golden rule was to appear mature; this was perfected by exercising a tight regime of not shaving.

No matter how much the scratching and itching persisted, shaving must be avoided. With this in mind, it was imperative to avoid the cat who would inevitably lick my bum-fluff off.

Preparation also involved stealing Dad's after-shave, saving school dinner money (expenses) and giving my boyish anatomy as much room as possible to keep my voice as low as was feasibly achievable – tight pants were definitely a no no.

Before all the planning felt in place, the big night would be upon me. Approaching the bar surreptitiously, with all the swagger and poise of some-one at least 18, I would order my pint of insipid bitter, then disappear off to the arcade machine, not even touch the beer and regress to the mental age of a four-year-old, blasting to my heart's content.

But that was then and this is now, and the industry has come a long way. However, it seems that the Amiga is about to be pushed that little bit further by Finnish programmers Bloodhouse.

Published under the Daze umbrella, Stardust is a spectacular version of the old Asteroids theme. The basic object is to clear the screen of asteroids and enemies while collecting all the bonuses and power-ups.

While it's a very simple game in essence, there is a tiny sub-plot. An evil professor has taken it upon himself to destroy the galaxy in its entirety and kidnap the beautiful princess Voi.

To this end he has cunningly disguised his top agents as meteors which he's dispatched to go on the rampage.

You play the do-gooding chisel-chinned hero in your big manly pointy space ship, whose task it is to blow everything to pieces.

OK, so there's the plot which really is purely incidental; the main thing the Bloodies (as we shall now call them) have been screaming about is that Stardust pushes the Amiga through new boundaries in graphical capabilities.

They've employed a ray tracing technique as yet unknown in the world of home computers. Stardust also uses 32 colours in the overscan mode. The programme has taken a full year to complete and much of its hi-tech development is down to Bloodhouse's chief programmer. He was formally responsible for the development of Real 3D, possibly the best ray tracing packages available on the Amiga.

Playwise, there are dozens of Asteroids-lookalike levels to do battle in. After the successful clearance of each planet, you play a sub-game as you travel to your next destination.

This is one of the most impressive routines ever to run on the Amiga and really does push its circuits to the limit.

It's a fast rolling, mega-scrolling shoot-'em-up blitz which left all of us completely ga-ga. Really the screenshots don't do this aspect of Stardust any justice – playing is believing.

The other great thing is that it comes at the bargain price of £16.99, though it's not a budget title by any means.

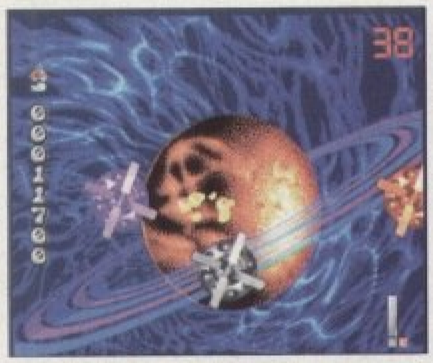
Stardust is going to go down as the definitive Asteroid clone for the Amiga. It's visually brilliant, sounds great and plays superbly.

The idea's a simple one, but works very effectively and at this bargain price, Stardust is unmissable. Now, you really can show off to all your mates who own consoles...

**SIMON CLAYS**



**If you're wondering where the spaceship is, it's under that grey blob which acts as your sheild**



**Oh dear, it's a death flying robot drone thingy. Nasty looking things, but wonderfully ray-traced!**



**By jabbing the spacebar during gameplay you can call up the weapons selection screen**

# STARDUST

**Let's take a stroll down memory lane and look at this Swedish Asteroids clone which has received a complete lick of 90s paint**



GAMER GOLD

VISION

AUDIO

DIFFICULTY

LASTABILITY

**92%**

A classic, there's no two ways about it. I just can't stress enough the merits of this title. It's brilliant, has fantastic graphics and is really playable. Total arcade quality – miss it at your peril.

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Daze |
| Developer ➤ | Bloodhouse |
| Disks ➤ | 1 |
| Price ➤ | £16.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | No |
| Size ➤ | 1 meg |



Having conquered the first six stages you face the end-of-level guardian

# Logic3

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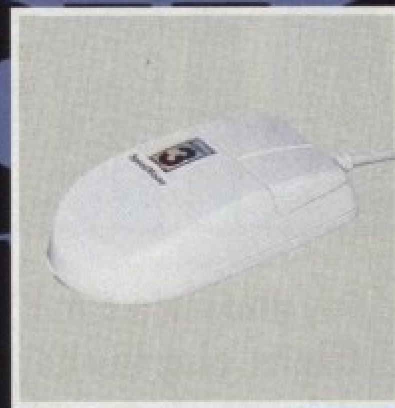


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### Quatro
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- Steel shaft

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### Pinto
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Suitable for younger gamesplayers or hand-held play.
*Model No. JT 151* **£12.99 inc. VAT.**

### Quatro GT
Classic arcade-style design
- Six heavy-duty microswitches
- Extra-long connector cable
- Independent rapid-fire button
- 3-way autofire facility
- Slow-motion facility
- Two fire buttons
- Steel shaft.

*Model No. JT 155* **£16.99 inc. VAT.**

### Pinto GT
Miniature version of Quatro GT but without rapid-fire and slow-motion. Suitable for younger gamesplayers or hand-held play.
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Sit down and chill, while you view the aftermath of your mission

# COMBAT AIR PATROL

**Psygnosis's new flight sim looks like their best product for a long while. Jonathan Maddock adjusts his flaps and takes a look**

If you utter the word Psygnosis then you'll more often that not get someone saying "oh, that company from Liverpool who did Lemmings". Lemmings is a classic piece of software, but unfortunately it has dwarfed Psygnosis as a company.

Over the years, Psygnosis have produced some of the best and most ground-breaking games you're ever likely to see. Shadow of the Beast, The Killing Game Show, Amour-Geddon, Lemmings, Hired Guns – the list is endless.

For a while though, everything went a bit astray with the releases of Ork, Leander, Cytron, Aquaventura, and Air Support. Every single one was a bit of a stinker and it looked as though the Psyggies were simply biding their time until the release of Lemmings 2.

I am now proud to announce the re-launch of Liverpool's finest software house.

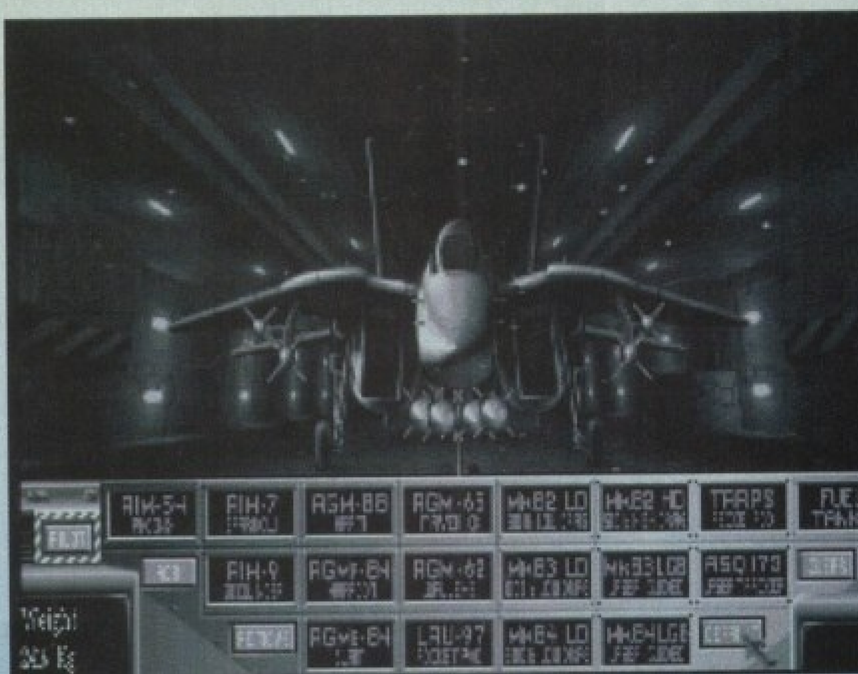
In production at the moment are Second Samurai, Microcosm and Armour-geddon 2. The first off the production line is Combat Air Patrol.

Sharp-eyed readers will notice that we actually reviewed it almost seven months ago, but then it was struck by production problems and the game designers decided to make some improvements.

Combat Air Patrol is now in the shops, so we felt it was only fair to re-review it for new readers and those who might have missed it first time around.

The game is a flight simulation accurately based around the F-14 Tomcat and the F-18 Hornet, and to top it all off it's set in the time of the Gulf War.

The primary objective is the explusion of enemy forces from within the pre-invasion boundaries of Kuwait. This where the game starts to mix reality with fantasy as you take control of the coalition forces. It's up to you just how important any follow-up measures will be once the Iraqis have pulled out of Kuwait – if you manage to get that far!




Normally it's the locker room, but here in the hangar's where the lads adjust their weaponery

You may decide that the coalition forces should continue the retaliation up to the point where Iraq itself is invaded and the fleeing forces "neutralised". It is entirely up to the individual.

Another objective in any re-invasion scenario would have to be Saddam Hussein himself and Combat Air Patrol includes points where you might just have a chance to end his life.

Before you start the Gulf war campaign you must familarise yourself with the two planes you'll be using, depending upon which mission you happen to be flying.

This can be done in two ways. The first is to select a training mode, which allows novice and experienced pilots to fine-tune their skills in a large number of areas. Flight training and weapons training against both air and ground targets are offered to test and practise your skills in all areas of combat.

The second way is the single mission option which allows an individual plane against a single selected target. Both air and ground attacks are available although your role on a mission will depend on which type of mission you selected.

There are 13 missions to choose from to test out your skills as a pilot. These range from train busting to runway strafing to Scud strikes. Whichever you decide upon you can guarantee that it's packed full of action.

Once you've mastered the flying techniques you can start the full campaign which is what Combat Air Patrol is all about. The campaign section is far too lengthy to go into major details about, but you basically take over the role of Norman Schwartzkopf as well as flying your two planes into battle. This section is terrifyingly realistic and will keep you going for months on end!

But the best part of the game has to be the actual flight simulation where you get the chance to leap into a F-18 or F-14 and declare war on the enemy.

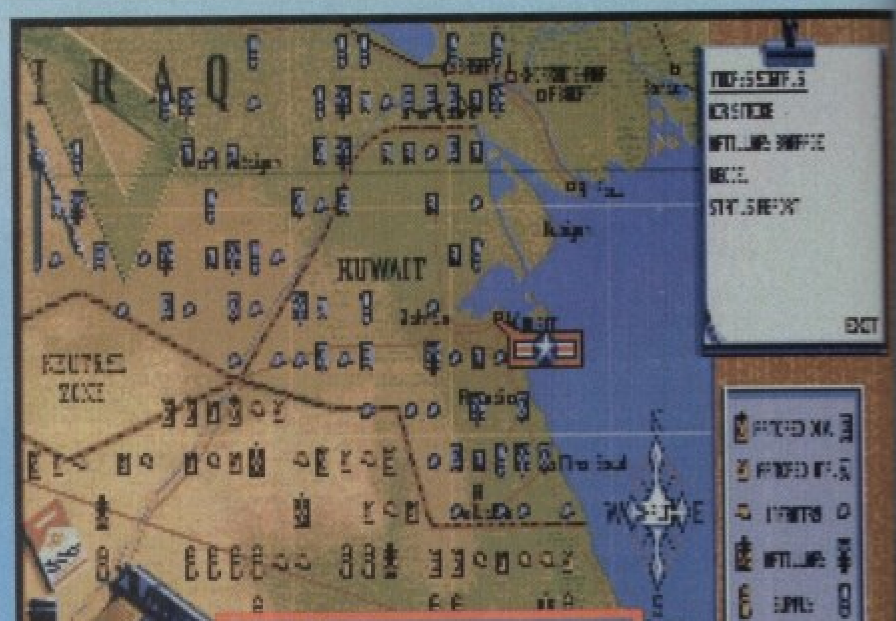
As you enter the cockpit, you see the controls and instrument panels, the outside world, through the cockpit windows, and the HUD (Head Up Display) upon which some flight and all combat information is displayed.

Because there are two planes, you have to learn what they do. Both the Tomcat and the Hornet share a number of controls and instruments which

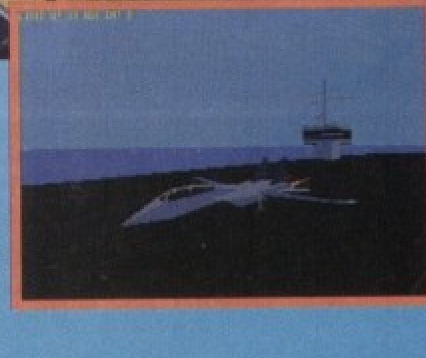
**GAMER GOLD**



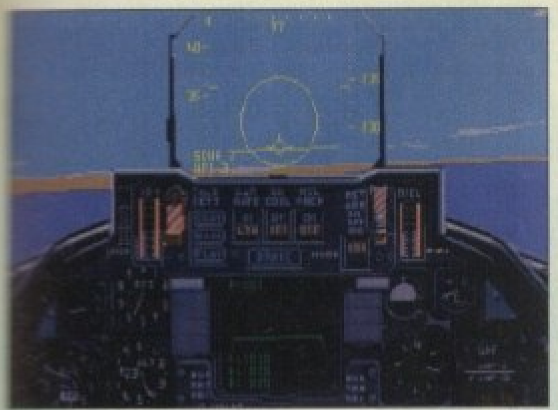
Ooh! What a pretty helmet you're got




No, it's not a weather map, it's a strategical view of the Gulf war, or have they changed it to conflict, or did it happen at all?



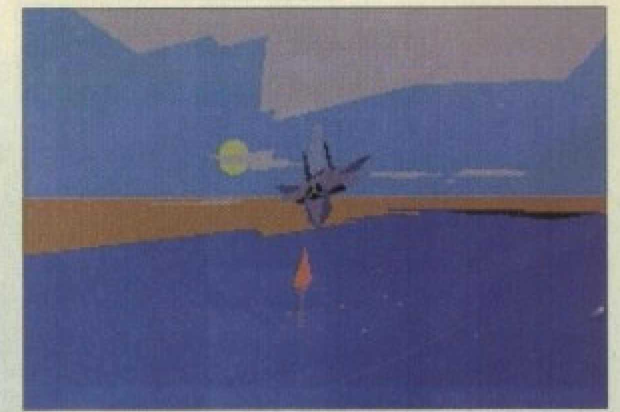
Sitting on the dock of the (Aircraft Carrier) Bay...



Stunning view of your cockpit



I wonder why it's called the combed view – is it because the pilot brushes it before he looks at it?



One of the many stunning-external shots – always a lot better than an internal view!

are essential for any aircraft. These instruments, such as altimeters and speed indicators, may however be displayed in a slightly different manner, often using a variation upon a standard instrument.

I won't bore you will hundreds of fiddly little details about the game, but will instead answer this question: What makes Combat Air Patrol different and better than all the other flight sims available on the market?

Well, for starters Combat Air Patrol doesn't play or feel like another flight sim. Even after just one go it seems fresh, new and exciting and puts some others to shame.

There a many nice touches, such as the radio. This allows contact with the airbase and other friendly units who keep you informed of campaign events as they unfold. This is very well done and highly realistic and it's all thanks to a few samples.

The graphics are particularly impressive with some brilliant views, such as the fly-past view which literally takes your breath away every time you turn it on.

The views are worth mentioning because you seem to be able to look at your aircraft and others from just about any angle imaginable.

The outside graphics are perhaps a bit sparse, but I suppose that's because they're fighting in the desert where only camels and huts exist.

I personally think that some flight sims are a bit stuffy and far too technical for their own good, but Combat Air Patrol has been a pleasant surprise.

The manual is nice and easy to read and comes complete with a sheet with numbered instructions on how to fight in the air, shoot things on the ground and more importantly how to take off! One of the most impressive factors has to be the speed and smoothness at which Combat Air Patrol runs. I played it on the A1200, but it was just as impressive on the A500. I couldn't find fault with it, and as a reviewer it's not often that I find a "perfect" game. I could drone on and on for hours about Combat Air Patrol, especially as I'm not normally the type of person to really be impressed by this sort of game, but suffice to say that Combat Air Patrol is a bit special, and flight fanatics should check it out immediately.

Psygnosis have started on the road to recovery and this is just the kind of game that will make the likes of MicroProse shake in their boots.

**JONATHAN MADDOCK**




Flight roster or our stewardess' address book, who knows?



Float to earth precariously on techni-coloured bin lid

# It's plane to see...

## F-14 Tomcat ▶

The Grumman F-14, or Tomcat, was developed as a no-compromise multi-purpose fighter aircraft. During years of service throughout the world, it has become the backbone of the US Navy fighter capability because of its outstanding performance in all areas of aerial combat.

It is powered by two General Electric F110 engines which accelerate the aircraft up to a speed of 1,560 mph (mach 2.3), making "straight-line" performance comparable to any fighter aircraft in the world.





## ◀ F-18 Hornet

The McDonnell Douglas/Northrop F/a-18 Hornet (to give it its full title) was conceived to fulfil a multi-purpose attack/fighter role which could also meet US Navy specifications.

It utilises two General Electric specifications augmented turbofans which output 32,000lbs/thrust offering maximum speed capabilities of 1,200 mph at altitude.

The large wing area, strengthened and widened fuselage (allowing for a larger fuel payload) and redesigned avionics pay tribute to the naval origins of the F-18, meaning increased range and take-off/landing capabilities.

It also allows the F-18 greater self-sufficiency in the field and ability to carry an extensive missile payload.

**VISION** GGGGGGGGGG

**AUDIO** GGGGGGGG

**DIFFICULTY** GGGGGGG

**LASTABILITY** GGGGGGGGG

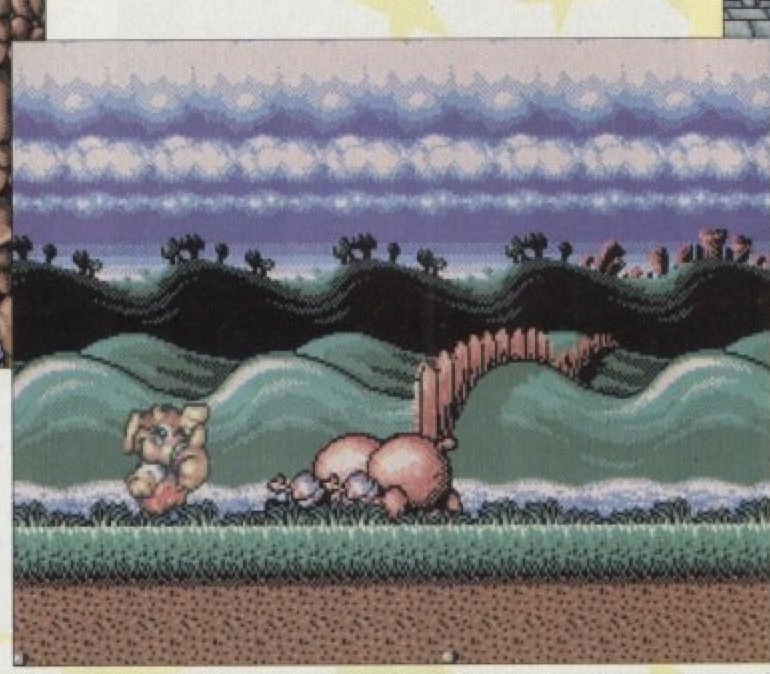
**91%**

Combat Air Patrol is the flight sim of the year and comes recommended for flight sim expert and beginner alike. It's fast, fun and highly addictive. A worthy Gamer Gold winner!

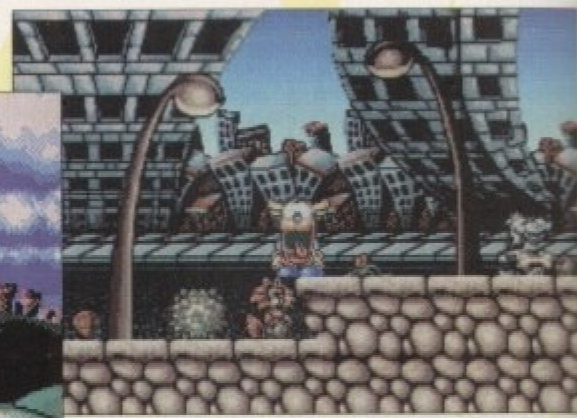
Publisher ➤ Psygnosis
Developer ➤ Maverick Simulations
Disks ➤ 3
Price ➤ £
HD Install ➤ Yes
Size ➤ 1 meg



Wonder Dog jumps around with the bunnies at the beginning of his adventure



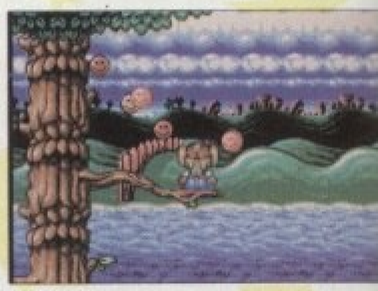
A thumbs up and a wink from Mr Waggly Ears as he defeats the end of Level one boss



Fancy getting beaten up by a cat! No wonder he's shocked!



Ey-up Chuck! WD practises a bit of rolling pin jumping on the second level



Conclusive proof! The moon is made of cheese and little green men do exist!

# WONDER DOG

**Woof Bark! Doggy platform fun courtesy of Core Design. Get down, Shep!**

If you had to name your top ten cutesy platformers, I can bet that you'd scribble down Chuck Rock as one of your favourites. Chuck Rock, which was created by Core Design, was a playful romp through the prehistoric ages.

The game's graphics shone out. They were drawn in a very cartoon-like style, but still managed to look good on the monitor screen. The animation was top-notch and you found yourself displaying cheesy grin after cheesy grin at the slapstick antics of Chuck and his enemies.

Mr Rock proved to be a big seller for Core Design, and they are pinning their hopes on their next game to do the same. Wonder Dog is a conversion from a certain console machine called the Mega CD (hence the name!), but don't let that put you off!

This the point of the review where we turn into *Jackanory* for a few brief paragraphs. Are you sitting comfortably children? Good, then I shall begin.

General Von Ruffbone and his loyal army of vicious dog troopers are sweeping, achieving total galactic domination in their wake.

As the enemy approaches the tranquil planet K9, a young pup is hastily injected with the top secret "wonder" serum and launched into space in a bone capsule.

Crashing to earth light years later, Wonder Dog must mature and develop his fighting skills by completing the seven perilous levels, gaining the required combat skills and defeating adversaries in order to return and save his planet from anihilation.

That concludes *Gamer Jackanory* for today, but'll we'll be back next week with the second part to the story, to be read by top TV funny man and game show host Les Dennis...

The action starts at Bunny Hop Meadow. The meadow is full of green pastures, clear skies and crystal blue waters and this is where Wonder Dog must begin his basic training. On this first level our doggy chum is plagued by all manner of dangerous creatures. Fluffy bunnies, swooping ducks, spiky hedgehogs and wily foxes are all out to stop him in his prime.

The pup with the flappy ears must collect as many of the bonuses and power-ups as possible in order to increase his score and more importantly gain extra lives.

On his "walkies", Wonder Dog will find various items that he can pick up. These include wings for energy, jewels that will give him extra points, bones (if he collects 100 he will gets an extra life), whirlwinds for short-term invincibility and smileys which reveal hidden platforms that lead to secret bonus levels.

Wonder Dog is a good little platformer, but is by no means a classic. The graphics are magnificent, wonderfully drawn and well animated.



The mid and end-of-level bosses are massive and again have been sketched to perfection.

The tunes are heavily loaded with a tremendous bit of bass playing and at no point do you feel like reaching for the volume switch to turn it down. Actual in-game sound effects are very sparse, but those which are in there are more than sufficent.

Wonder Dog is going to be one of those platformers that will either interest or infuriate you. Some gamers might not like the control system because as times it's quite finicky and you seem to fall off platforms through no fault of your own. The controls for me though were just fine and simply added to the challenge of the game.

Core's platformer is extremely hard and the later levels are not for the faint-hearted or the beginner. Wonder Dog will last you quite a while, but it is not fantastically different from any other cutesy platformer.

So in the end, recommended for dedicated platform followers only, which is a shame because this is the best looking platformer I've played in ages.

Maybe with a bit of extra thought placed in the gameplay department it could've appealed more, but it turns out nothing more than an average romp.

**JONATHAN MADDOCK**

| Category | Rating |
|---|---|
| VISION | 10/10 |
| AUDIO | 8/10 |
| DIFFICULTY | 7/10 |
| LASTABILITY | 6/10 |

**72%**

Cute to look at it may be, but if playability isn't there then all the graphics in the world won't save the day. One for the dedicated platform freaks only, I think.

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Core Design |
| Developer ➤ | In-house |
| Disks ➤ | 2 |
| Price ➤ | £25.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | N/A |
| Size ➤ | 1 meg |

NETWORK Q RAC RALLY

# CHECK OUT THE LATEST FLIGHT SIMULATOR




Get your **FREE** Rally Souvenir Poster by telephoning 0625 859333 **NOW.** Limited Edition.

*This rally sim's so lifelike you can almost smell the high-octane fumes.* **"We have lift off!"** Just what you **don't** want to hear from your computer co-driver...

He's screaming pace notes above the shriek of the engine... you're pushing it to the edge in the final thrilling stages of the Network Q RAC Rally.

You're strapped into one of the five rally-bred supercars, speeding in the exact tracks of the '93 Rally leaders. Each car handles differently. Each tests your driving skills flat out.

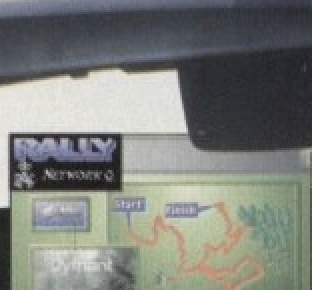
You're picking up vital seconds when you hang a bend late, clip a bank and flip into a roll – damage your car and you dent your chances.

It's the sequel to the top-selling RAC Rally game. But the sound's even more deafening, the digitised video graphics even more *in your face* for an atmosphere that's totally turbo-charged.

Flying around the world's toughest rally course is one thing. Staying on earth is another.

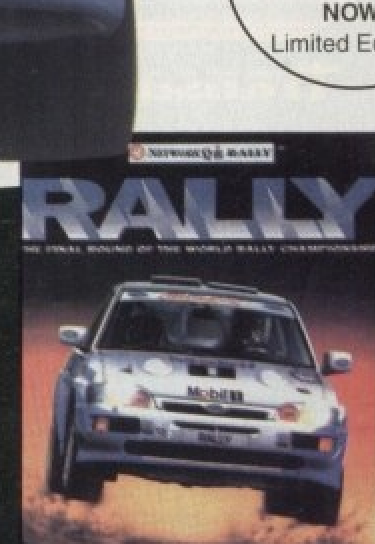
**WARNING: CRASH HELMETS NOT PROVIDED.**

Available for PC, Amiga. PC screen shots shown.








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# DREAMLANDS

**Do you play full pricers all the time? Well, now you can just wash and go with this marvellous three-in-one compilation bundle from Silmarils**



## Storm Master

This is perhaps the weakest title in the compilation and somewhat pales when compared to its bundle partners. In this arcade/strategy game you get to harness the power of the winds (that's begging for a schoolboy-type pun) in the land of Eolia as you strive to become the Storm Master.

Eolia is in constant conflict with its twin island, Sharkaania, where the winds are the masters of natural harmony. The reason for the war has been forgotten long ago, so you'd think they'd just shake and make up, but that wouldn't really make a good computer product.

You have been appointed by the Council of Seven to take upon the task of Grand Magister of Eolia who previous applicant was viciously murdered only days ago. Your goal is to loot and destroy the seven enemy cities and thus cause the fall of Sharkaania, but the only snag is that your enemy is trying to do the same to you.

Although it is an arcade and a strategy game, the emphasis is on the latter. The graphics are adequate enough and the sound is reasonable. If you like this type of game then I suppose you might have already bought it, but if you haven't then you'll be satisfied with it in the compilation.

If you don't like this type of thing then there's no harm in chucking it straight in the bin and concentrating on the other two far superior products.

VISION
AUDIO
DIFFICULTY
LASTABILITY
OVERALL 65%

## Ishar

VISION
AUDIO
DIFFICULTY
LASTABILITY
OVERALL 90%

Ishar is regarded by many as one of the finest RPGs you can buy for the Amiga and was given generous marks by various computer magazines. This Silmarils adventure is heavily influenced by Dungeon Master, but that isn't such a bad thing.

The graphics are perhaps some of the finest seen in an RPG and really give the whole product a polished and professional feel.

The action centres around the exploits of a band of five brave and heroic adventurers as they try to kill a shady and powerful figure called Krough.

Krough, who has slowly grown rich and powerful and built a temple (the Ishar) on the Kingdom's borders, threatens the world of Kendoria. The world has decided that you and your band of warriors should rightfully dispose of him.

Ishar – Legend of the Fortress boats over 100,000 locations and hundreds of enemies and characters. The game uses a flexible, uncomplicated and user friendly control system which makes it simple and fun to use.

This is a truly great adventure and one that any half-decent RPG fan could not do without. It may look and play like Dungeon Master, but Ishar is terrific in its own right and is by far the best piece of software in this Dreamlands compilation. Ignore it at your peril!




## Transarctica

It's not every day you get up out of bed and find that the planet Earth has been completely frozen over! Well, that is what has happened in Transarctica. The sun can no longer be seen and has become a mystical heavenly body.

Apart from the re-emergence of the woolly mammoth, the only means of transport is the steam train. The Viking Union have complete control over the immense railway network and thus they monopolise all means of transport, giving them unquestionable authority.

You play the part of Chief of the Ambivalents, a set of curious beings who seek out the old myths of the sun. Your mission is to find a way to restore the sun to the world.

The Viking Union is none too pleased about this fact because if the sun reappears they'll lose power and a whole lot of money to boot. The Ambivalents' greatest victory to date is the theft of one of the Viking Union's greatest trains, the Transarctica.

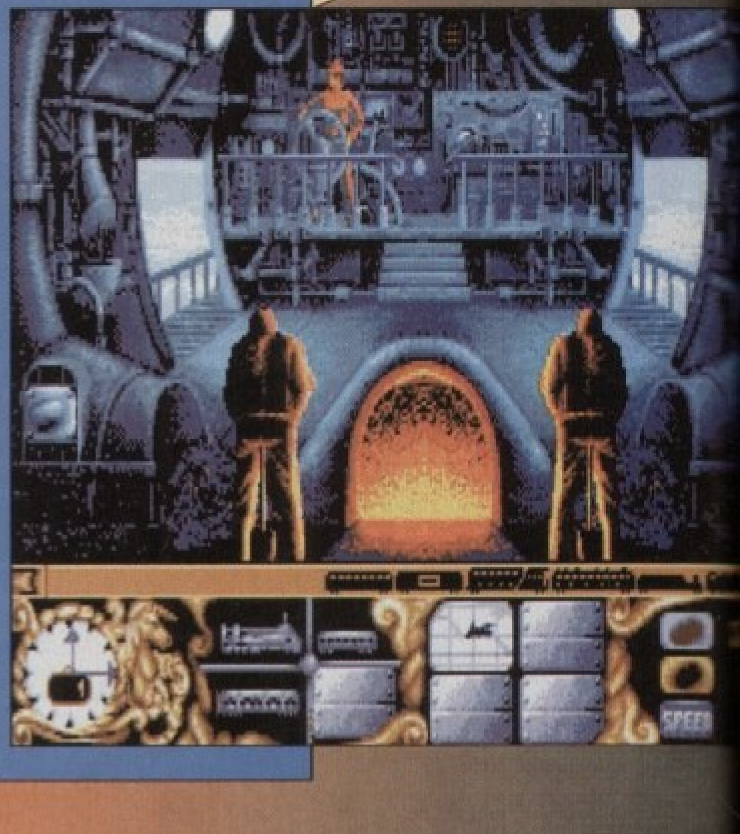
To progress successfully you must build up the size and strength of the Transarctica. Additional wagons can be bought and extra money can be gained by trading. You must also avoid the battle trains of the Viking Union and other hazards such as wolves.

Transarctica is really a trading game that contains only a small hint of arcade action. The graphics are excellent and the sound is adequate enough. I guess that if you like trading games then you'll love Transarctica. It is well worth spending a few hours on and is a worthy inclusion into this compilation.

**JONATHAN MADDOCK**

VISION
AUDIO
DIFFICULTY
LASTABILITY
OVERALL 82%

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Daze |
| Developer ➤ | Silmarils |
| Disks ➤ | 5 |
| Price ➤ | £29.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | N/A |
| Size ➤ | ½ meg |



**The return of the classic shoot-'em-up. Is that good or bad news? Mindscape obviously think it's good because they've just released one...**

# OVERKILL

Originality. A word that doesn't get used very much when describing the state of today's computer games. In just one year you might only get a handful of software that could call itself original.

Apart from a selected few, almost every game that is currently sitting on the shop shelves can be instantly compared to another product.

It now seems that game designers are looking back to when computers were new, fresh and exciting for ideas. Take a look at the evidence.

Qwak is a game so like Bubble Bobble that somebody somewhere should be suing somebody else, but is also a brilliant piece of game design. It's gone right back to basics with simple gameplay and playability, enhancing the original idea via the use of improved graphics and sound.

The same goes for D-Hero, Gremlin's latest shoot-'em-up extravaganza which more than places a nod and a wink in the direction of Z-Out and R-Type. The old style game is back in business and Mindscape are about to prove it with their latest release, Overkill.

Let's not beat about the bush. Overkill is Defender with knobs on. Defender, for those who don't know, is a game whereupon you piloted a spaceship around a screen which scrolls horizontally. You "defend" a number of men who are being accosted by several nasty looking aliens.

Overkill is along a similar theme, but has been updated and enhanced for the 90s thanks to the increase of quality in the graphics and sound departments.

You progress towards the centre of the solar system by eliminating all alien resistance on each planet. Your ultimate goal is the Enemies Fortress Planet, orbiting nearest the sun.

A number of Trilithuim Crystals have been scattered about above each planet. Aliens will launch dangerous drones in an attempt to collect the crystals in order to transmute into even more deadly and menacing aliens.

However, help is at hand in the form of support troops who are capable of blowing up the crystals using deadly Helcium mines.

Once a crystal has been destroyed, the trooper will await your return in order to be stocked with a new mine. To do this, you must fly your spaceship at the trooper as he leaps in the air.

Once he has caught hold of your ship he will be restocked with a new Helicium mine and can continue his destruction run. All you have to do is simply return him to the ground and the nearer a Trilithium crystal, the better!

The joystick controls your direction of flight and the Fire button unleashes a variety of laser beams, all of which can be powered up, at the enemy. In addition, you have a limited amount of Antimatter shield at your disposal. Hitting the spacebar will activate and deactivate the shield. With the shield on you will be completely invulnerable to alien attacks.

Once a planet has been cleared, you are presented with a map of the solar system. By using the joystick you have to guide the cursor to the next planet you want to conquer. You start the game with five ships and a small amount of shield. An extra ship and extra shield are awarded every 25,000 points.

That's basically everything you need to know simply because Overkill is perhaps one of the most uncomplicated games you're ever likely to meet. For the moment forget about the comparison to Defender and let's concentrate on the actual game itself.

Overkill is an appropriate name for the game because there are loads of enemies to kill and at times there are perhaps just too many to cope with.

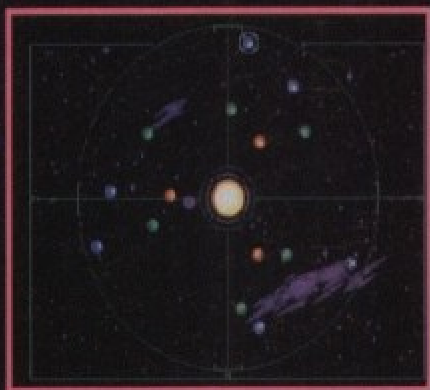
The graphics are particularly impressive with alien guts flying around the screen in abundance plus there are some psychedelic introduction screens to boot (yeah man!).

The sound is plentiful with loads of swooshes, blasts, explosions and a couple of sound samples placed here and there. Playability wise you can't go far wrong with this intense shoot-'em-up and it's so addictive that it should have a government health warning placed on it.

The only slight problem is the fact that it is a Defender clone and the people who like to keep an eye on those pennies might not want to splash out on it.

Overkill has great graphics, excellent sounds, a wealth of playability and a copious amount of addiction. What more do you want from a piece of computer software? A highly recommended blast from the past updated for the 90s.

**JONATHAN MADDOCK**



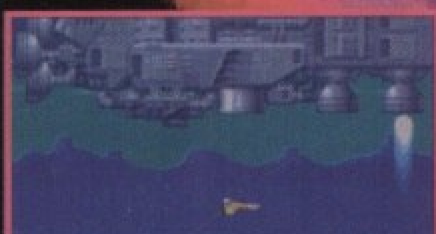
The solar system map where you get to choose which planet you want to conquer



The second level and you encounter some wiggly snake-type things



The Overkill Stunt Team swings into action. First they jump out of a spacecraft at 1,500 mph, then they parachute into a war zone that comes complete with missiles and everything!



The beginning of Overkill and your ship is dropped off by Space Astro-Taxis!



Alien beasties at 12 o'clock! OK, Squadron Leader Squiffy Hotpants here! I'm going in for King and Country, see you back in Blighty for tea and cakes!

**VISION** (9/10)

**AUDIO** (7/10)

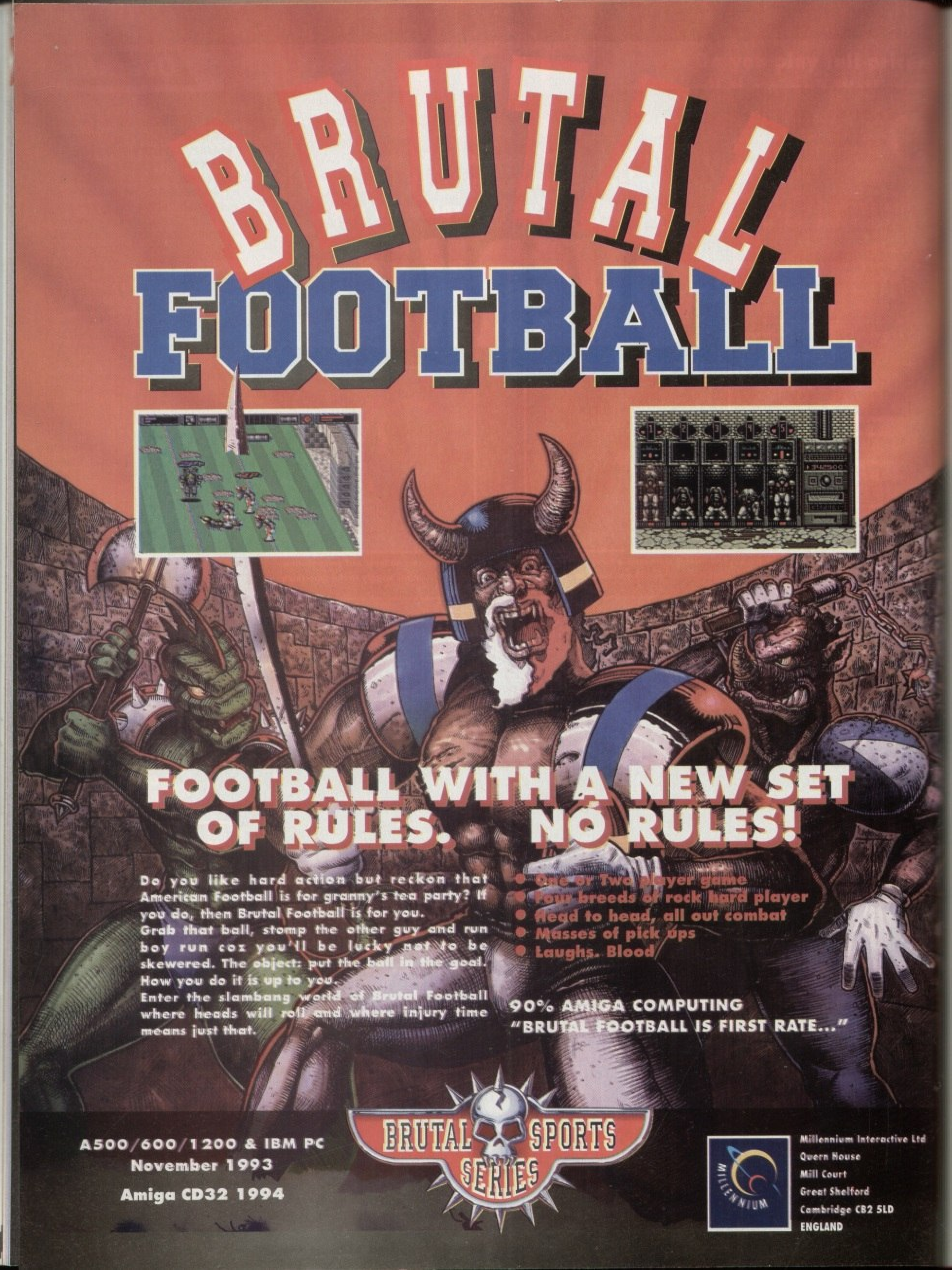
**DIFFICULTY** (9/10)

**LASTABILITY** (9/10)

**88%**

Overkill leans a little too much towards Defender for my liking, but does contain superior graphics and sound. Mindscape have created an easy and fun to play blast-'em-up.

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Mindscape |
| Developer ➤ | TWB. |
| Disks ➤ | 2 |
| Price ➤ | £25.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | No |
| Size ➤ | ½ meg |


BRUTAL
FOOTBALL
FOOTBALL WITH A NEW SET OF RULES. NO RULES!
Do you like hard action but reckon that American Football is for granny's tea party? If you do, then Brutal Football is for you.
Grab that ball, stomp the other guy and run boy run coz you'll be lucky not to be skewered. The object: put the ball in the goal. How you do it is up to you.
Enter the slambang world of Brutal Football where heads will roll and where injury time means just that.
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• Four breeds of rock hard player
• Head to head, all out combat
• Masses of pick ups
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November 1993
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BRUTAL SPORTS SERIES
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Millennium Interactive Ltd
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Cambridge CB2 5LD
ENGLAND

# The CHEAP seats

**Skint? I bet you are, so why not take a peek at all these latest budgets, rounded up and reviewed for your deliberation...**

## Robin Hood
## Kixx XL • £12.99

**GAMER GOLD**

The ancient castle of Nottingham has been taken over by the evil Sheriff. Higher taxes, harsh punishments and gold-hungry merchants are making life hell for the local peasants. You must take up the role Robin Hood, and recruit and direct your band of Merry Men.

That's the low-down for this vastly underrated isometric adventure originally from Millennium. The game uses a unique real-time adventure system which can all be controlled via the use of some icons and the mouse.



Small icons but great gameplay

It is completely open-ended. You are free to do anything you like, wherever and whenever you want. If you're really lazy, you can simply do nothing, but hey that's not really the point of the game, is it?

The other characters all move about independently and have little lives of their own. You can talk to these other people or just listen in on conversations, thanks to the real speech interaction feature.

I have always liked Robin Hood and am surprised that many software buyers didn't actually realise how good it was. The graphics are small, but well defined. The sound is atmospheric with a few choice sound effects dropped in here and there.

The gameplay is its best feature, though, and you can spend many hours just exploring Robin Hood's world and having fun at the same time. If Robin Hood passed you by when it was released in 1991, don't let it pass you by in 1993, especially at this bargain of a price.




## Knights of the Sky
## Kixx XL • £16.99

**GAMER GOLD**

Nowadays there isn't a day that goes by without the mention of a brand new all-singing, all-dancing modern hi-tech flight sim. Due to modern technology, wars are almost all fought via computers, especially where planes are concerned.

All you have to do is get in your cockpit, take off, press a few buttons and Bob's your uncle – you've blown up your enemy target from miles away. It didn't used to be like that, though. In ye olden times pilots depended on their flying skills to stay alive, as is very well demonstrated in Knights of the Sky.



Dogfighting like it used to be

You get the chance to fly every major fighter that was used in WW1 (over 20, in fact!). There were no radars or missiles in those days; you were sat down in an old heap of a plane with a compass in one hand, the yoke in the other, your finger on the trigger and a pair of naff leather pants wrapped around your legs.

In Knights' you get the chance to play either the part of Tommy or Jerry. You can try your hand at one of the hundreds of missions available including ground support, bombing and escort duties, or you can take to the skies in a head-to-head dogfight with an opposing "ace" pilot.

Graphically Knights' is fantastic, with 13 dazzling 3D perspectives to choose from to watch your victory or failure in the air.

The gameplay is basic (as you'd might expect) but still retains a wonderful sense of playability and a freshness which makes the so-called modern flight sims look rather stale.

Flight fanatics looking for something different should seriously consider buying this brilliant sim.



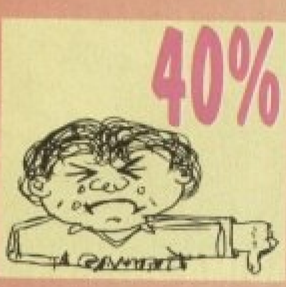

## Links • Kixx XL • £16.99

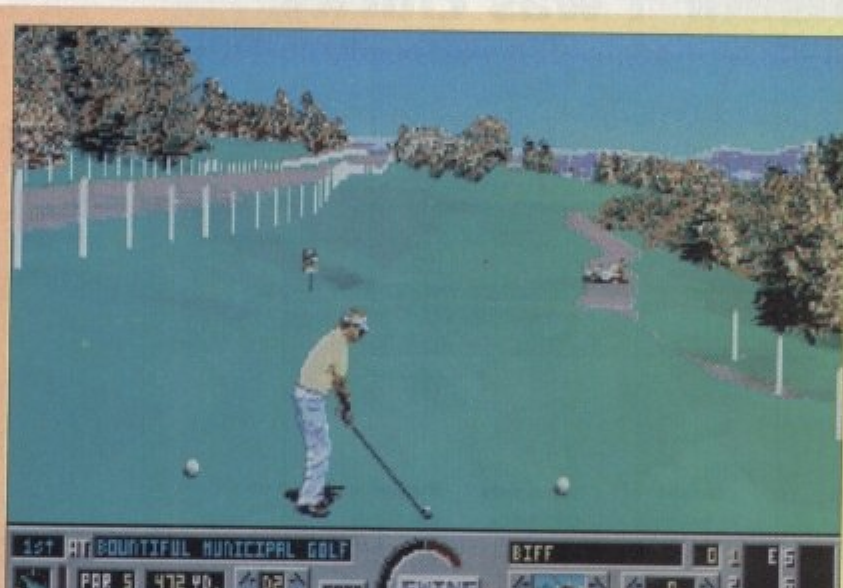
Over the years there have been many golf games. Some have been very good while most have been bloody awful. One thing you can say about all of them is the standard of graphics has never been particularly good. Our PC-owning chums have had it good on that front with realistic digitised graphics and sound.

Links on the Amiga, just like its PC counterpart, contains some stunning graphics with actual digitised trees and buildings and an incredible 3D contoured terrain.

The game designers have tried to make it the most realistic golf game ever. Accurate physics of flight and impact of the golf ball have been included into the program. You can adjust the golfer's stance, swing plane and just about everything down to the colour of your tee.

That all sounds well and good, but unfortunately it is just too realistic and this makes the gameplay rather dire. The graphics, because they are digitised, take ages to update and this just creates boredom. I could recommend this to the dedicated golf fan, but everyone else should stay well clear.




Very realistic, but at the expense of speed

# ALFRED CHICKEN

## Take control of the fowl on the prowl in Mindscape's latest cluck-tastic egg-stravaganza. Let's find out whether Alfie's a prime Bernard Matthews bird or a sparrow's ankle

What can you say, we've had them all! Ninja ants from another dimension, frogs with superhero-caped powers, fish that are secret agents and now a bloody chicken. Life in the ever-surreal computer industry gets stranger still.

It's got to the stage now where this reviewer is no longer surprised when the nutter sits next to him on the bus asking if you've seen his camel, because you probably have. You just nod and exclaim "donkey", without so much as a shrug of the shoulders.

What some would describe as hallucinations are passed off as normal day-to-day occurrences. A six foot squirrel? No worries. A crocodile in a morning suit? Doesn't raise a second glance. But a chicken called Alfred who enters a by-election?

Why is it called Alfred? To me that seems an odd name for a chicken. Never mind the fact that this chicken had political aspirations – why Alfred? Chickens are called Clucky or Chucky not Alf.

At the end of the day however, if we spent all day pondering over such dilemmas then nothing would get done and we'd all end up with fried brains, so without further ado let's get into the plot.

The plot's pretty simple. The Meka-Chickens have whisked off with Billy Egg and his brothers. The sole purpose of their fiendish egg-napping is to carry out their devilish cloning experiment.

### FEATHERED FRIEND

Only one man – well, chicken – can save the eggs, and that's Alf. As the only feathered friend with a bionic beak, Alf has to battle through 11 levels of platforming mayhem.

As Alf pecks his way through the various levels he is rewarded for his bravery. For instance, releasing all the balloons on each level takes the feathered one to Mr Pekle's space lab where he is given extra points.

Also, if Alfred keeps a beady eye out and collects a hundred of the many bonuses which lie around, Mr Pekle rewards him with an extra life.

Not only does the tandoori'd one have bonuses to aid him, there are a series of devices to give him a hand. Springs, for example, propel Alf to a higher part of the stage – when he uses these you could call him a spring chicken (ooh, rotten egg joke – Ed).

There are also buttons to peck which access other parts of the level, and ice blocks which can be pecked for similar outcomes. Unfortunately for Alfred, there are also quite a selection of enemies within the employ of the Meka-Chickens and most of them are pretty nasty. These include underwater whales, a Jack-in-the-bomb who fires bombs out his mouth, a bitchy ladybird which can't be trusted and a whole host of others.

Looking on the plus side, Alfred has a fair few power-ups of his own to collect. Keep your eyes open for a can o' worms which gives Alf a spinning, monster-killing worm, and wrapped-up presents which make the breasted one invincible for a while.

Of course we can't forget Alfie's own bionic beak which, when put into peck mode or used in a nose-dive, is very effective against the foes.

As platformers go, Alfred Chicken ranks quite highly. He's definitely in the size-one-free-range-ranking. The graphics are slick, well animated and cartoony rather than cutesy.

There's also a fair splattering of humour clucking around. For example, when Alfred meets an untimely roasting at the hand of the Meka-Chickens he explodes into feathers which then proceed to float to the ground.

Alfred Chicken has a great deal to offer gamers whether platform fans or not. It's far better than most of the average chicken-run-of-the-mill stuff that gets pumped at us daily. No-one can excuse the silly name, but don't be put off – it's a well-polished egg-stremely addictive title that'll have you crowing and clucking until dawn. It's a rooster.

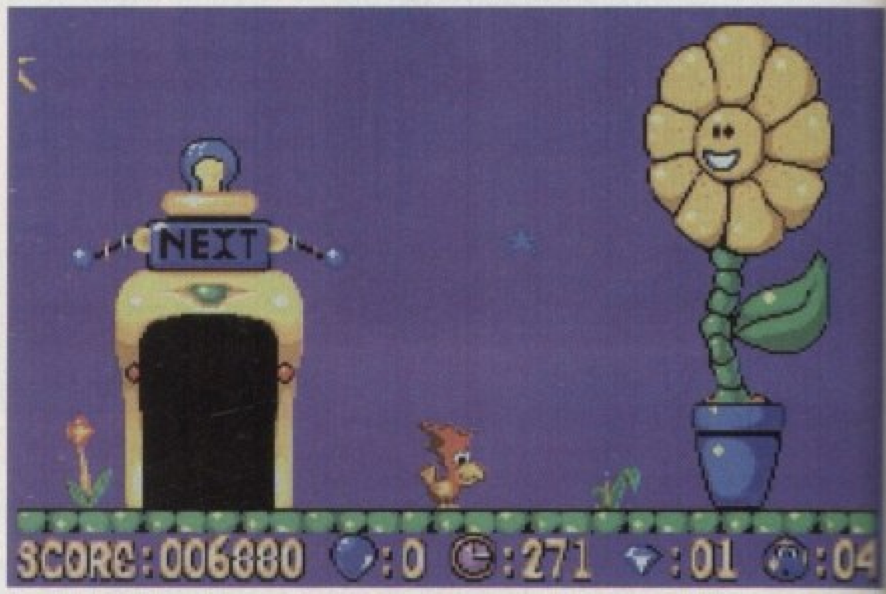
**SIMON CLAYS**



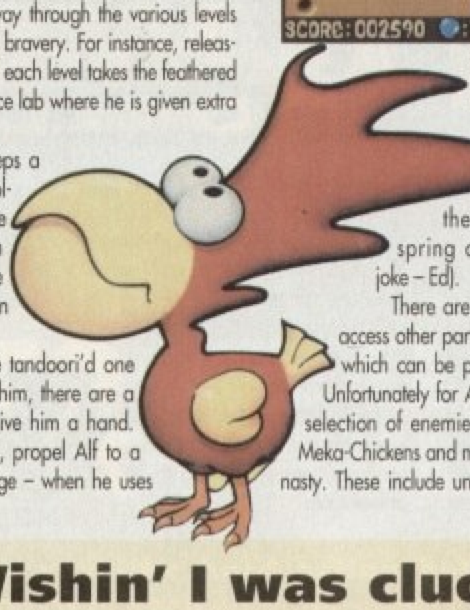

**The Meka-Chickens steal the eggs in UFO egg-sclusive**




**Why did the chicken cross the mouse? To get at the balloon, silly!**




**Alfred and the Vitalite sunflower decide to turn Alf into a butterball chicken**



### Wishin' I was clucky




**Score** · **Number of balloons to collect** · **Bonus time remaining** · **Number of diamonds remaining** · **Number of Alfreds remaining**

| VISION | |
|---|---|
| Rating | 8/10 |
| AUDIO | 7/10 |
| DIFFICULTY | 8/10 |
| LASTABILITY | 8/10 |

**86%**

Alfred's the cock with the lot, the chicken who's kickin'. Lot's of platform fun and frolics for all budding Rhode island Reds. Alfred's tastier than a McChicken and will last a lot longer.

| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Mindscape |
| Developer ➤ | Twilight |
| Disks ➤ | 1 |
| Price ➤ | £25.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | N/A |
| Size ➤ | 1 meg |



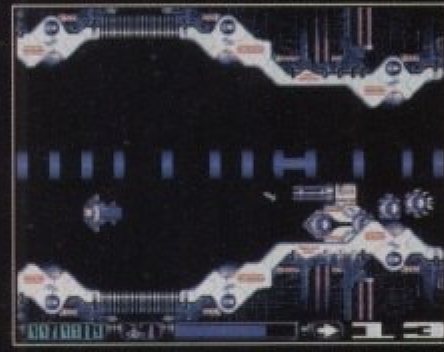
Fresh from the vaults of total play-ability comes this unique reprise of the classic shoot 'em up. Featuring the fastest scrolling and most detailed graphics that the Amiga has ever seen, pit your wits and reflexes against fleets of Leviathan spaceships as your Manta swoops low and leaves a trail of mayhem in its wake.
URIDIUM 2
"It's absolutely stunning with superb graphics, marvellous effects and simple-as-pie gameplay."
Amiga Action.
"Uridium II is fantastic. You can take our word for it... Smashing!"
Amiga Format.
"All in all, Uridium II is shaping up to be one helluva game."
CU Amiga.
MANTA
FOR THE AMIGA 500 (1 MEG), 600, 1200 ENHANCED.
UTILISES MOST MEMORY UPGRADES. SOON FOR THE AMIGA CD 32!
GRAFTGOLD
Creative Software
C1, Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, London E1 9SS © 1993 GraftGold. Published by Renegade



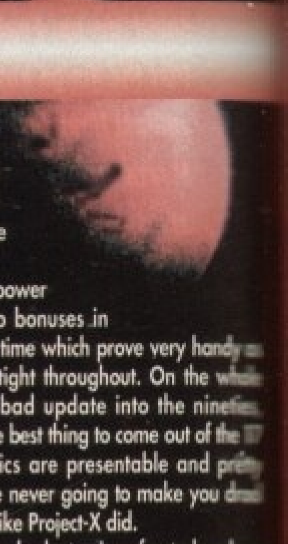
You can tell it's going to be one of those alien shoot-'em-up frenzy days when the sky' is this grey



Gawd, those bloody worms get into every orifice



You big bully in your end-of-level type tank. Why do you have to pick on me?



# CARDIAXX

## ...no holds barred blasting as Team 17 revamp to good effect

As marketing strategies go, Team 17 seem to have the gaming industry sussed – take all your old products and, after listening to the criticism of the reviewers and gaming public, revamp them and toss them out at silly prices.

If you examine the budget charts of recent months, you'll see a whole stream of Team 17 product: an enhanced version of Project-X, Alien Breed Special Edition and a remixed Assassin have all sold in boxloads.

They've also found tremendous success with their selection of recent cheap priced new releases like F-17 Challenge and Qwak. Both of these products featured smart play at less than half the price of other software companies.

This is as neat a juncture as is necessary to meet their latest product to receive the Team 17 energy injection.

Cardiaxx was originally released by Electronic Zoo some time ago, receiving mixed reviews and featuring little in the way of true game action. The boys from Wakefield saw potential and have given it the treatment.

Cardiaxx is a no nonsense blaster set strangely enough in space in the future. Taking on the role of Pope (a hardened Han Solo type astro-jock), you blast off from the surface of the planet surface to take on the might of an alien fleet. The scales are tipped heavily out of your favour, but if anyone can perform miracles then it's you – or so the manual would have you believe.

After a short intro sequence, it's straight into the action. Cardiaxx is an horizontal bi-directional scroller that moves at a fair old rate of knots – 50Hz to be technically correct.

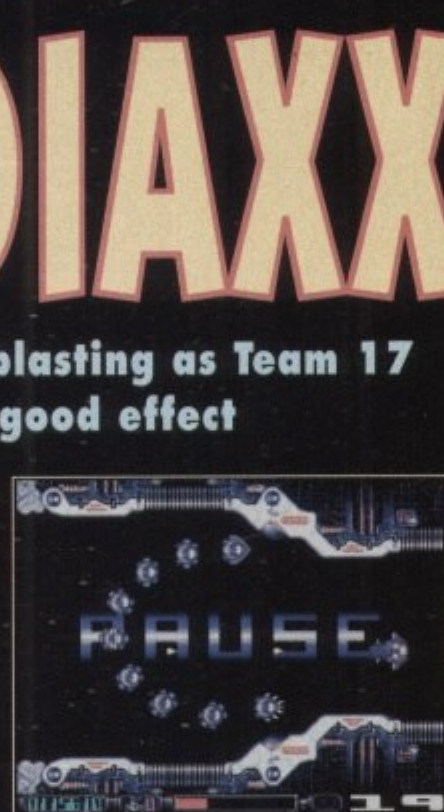
You respond to the enemy via your on board droid who passes on audio messages informing you where the exactly the foe are. There's also a nice little graphical arrow which points you in the right direction in case you're like me and can't tell your right from your left.

Once you're in the thick of it, not only do you have to use your skill to knock those nasty, bully "gang up on one little space ship would you" aliens, but it's all against the clock.

If you take too long over the task in hand it's curtains for you and your ship is destroyed.

Unlike many space shoot-'em-ups where your ship can absorb only one enemy sbot or be involved in one collision, Cardiaxx is made of sterner stuff.





Yes, I know it's paused. That's because I pressed 'P'

Although your spaceship has a finite amount of energy, you can take a number of hits, the damage being reflected by an ever-diminishing energy bar.

Once you've seen off various types of centipede and other suchlike aliens, there's a minx of a level guardian to contend with.

Also at the end of each level there's a special Deep-Space bonus zone where the aim is to eradicate as many of the pesky vermin as possible in a given time.

Your ship also has the ability to have its weapon system upgraded, which is quite useful, as many of the nasties require special hits or large scale damage.

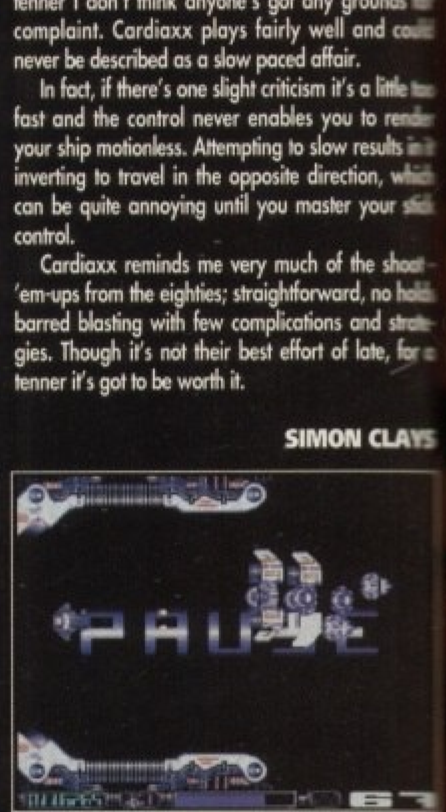
Along with the power ups, there'are also bonuses in the shape of extra time which prove very handy as time is extremely tight throughout. On the whole Cardiaxx isn't a bad update into the nineties, although it's not the best thing to come out of the 17 stable. The graphics are presentable and pretty smooth, but they're never going to make you drool over your monitor like Project-X did.

However, for the budget price of a tad under a tenner I don't think anyone's got any grounds for complaint. Cardiaxx plays fairly well and could never be described as a slow paced affair.

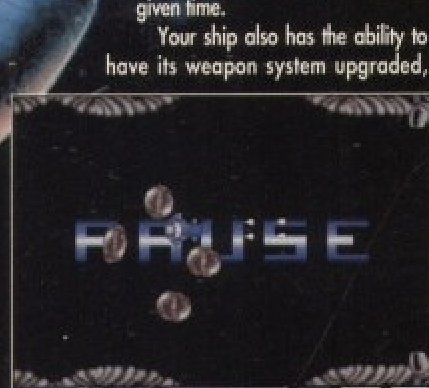
In fact, if there's one slight criticism it's a little too fast and the control never enables you to render your ship motionless. Attempting to slow results in it inverting to travel in the opposite direction, which can be quite annoying until you master your stick control.

Cardiaxx reminds me very much of the shoot-'em-ups from the eighties; straightforward, no holds barred blasting with few complications and strategies. Though it's not their best effort of late, for a tenner it's got to be worth it.

**SIMON CLAYS**



The big fight between your ship, the level baddy and the now infamous neon pause sign



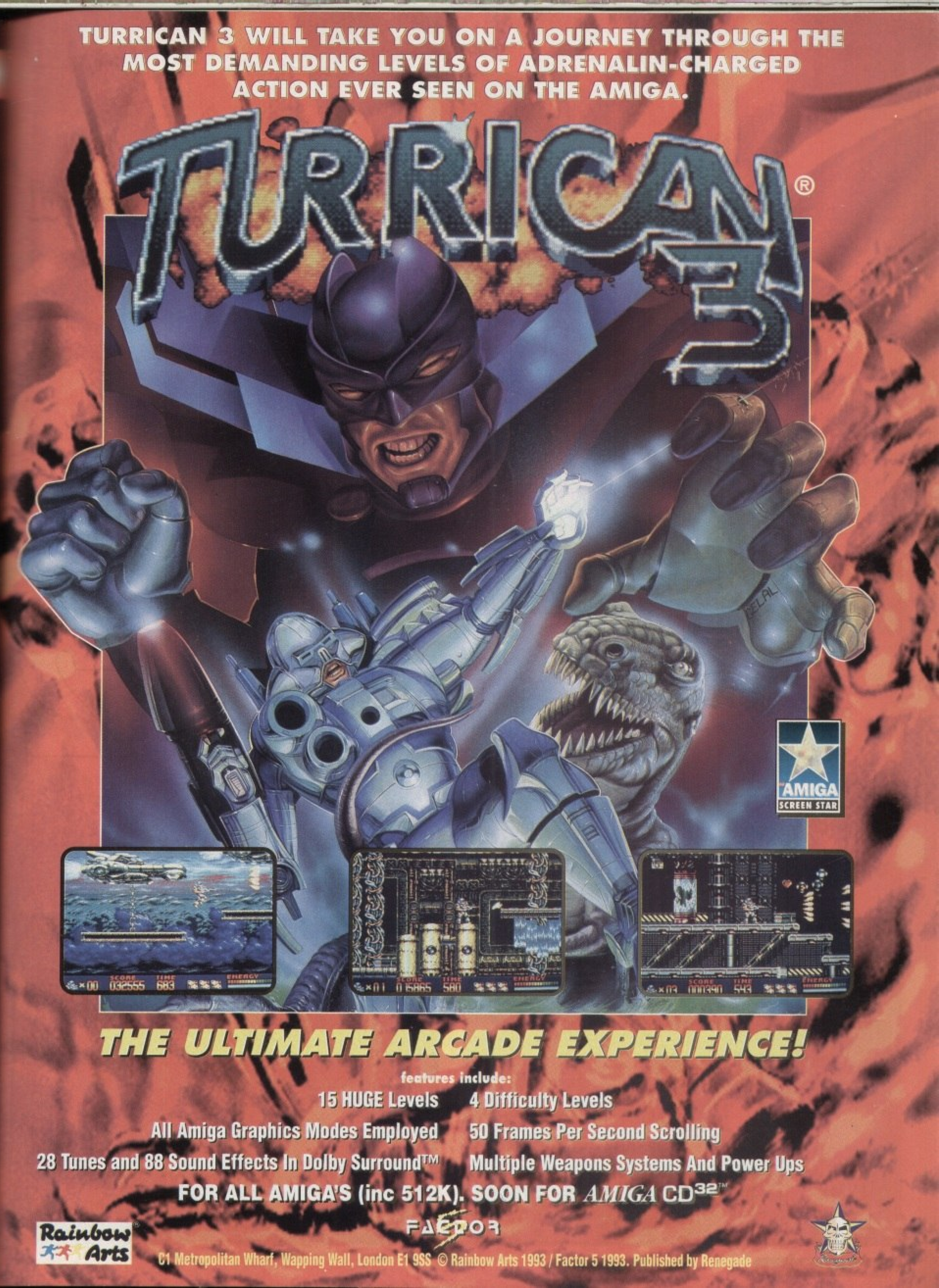
And the fans shout "You only pause while you're winning". The saga of the pause button continues, but remember kids, keep your paws off

| | |
|---|---|
| VISION | 7/10 |
| AUDIO | 7/10 |
| DIFFICULTY | 8/10 |
| LASTABILITY | 7/10 |

**Cardiaxx is nothing new, but it never stood up and said it was. Very straightforward blasting mayhem frenzy and a decent cheapy to add to your shoot -'em-ups handy when life becomes a drag and you're feeling psychotic.**

**70%**

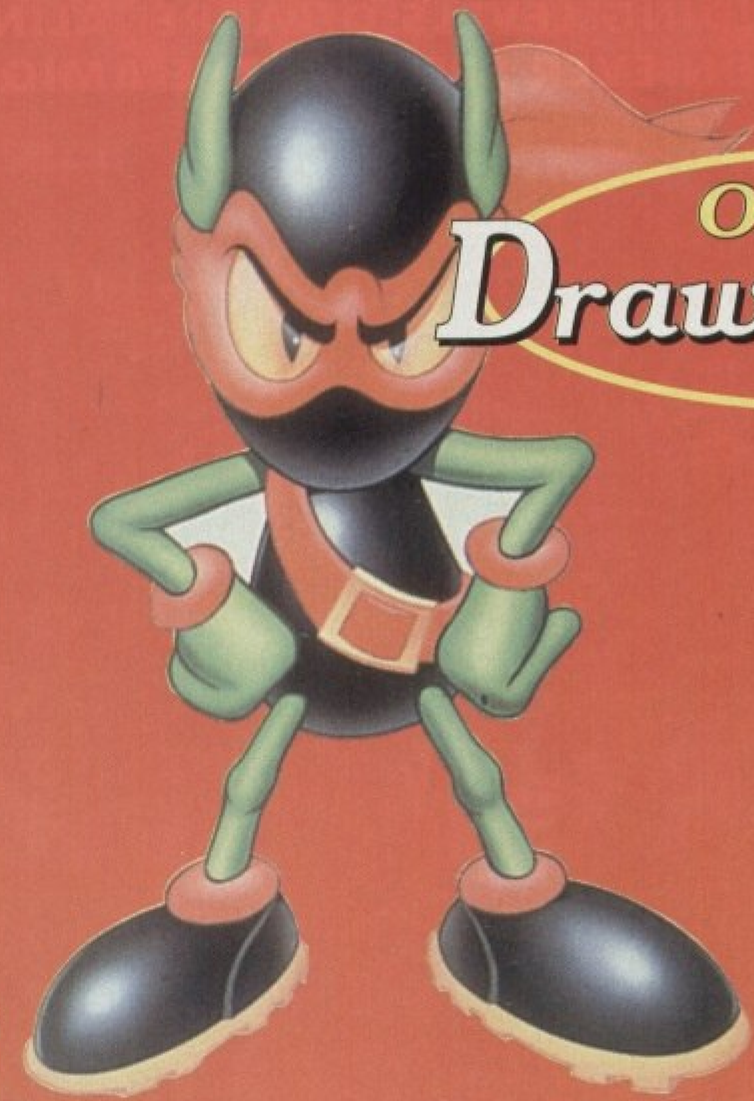
| | |
|---|---|
| Publisher ➤ | Team 17 |
| Developer ➤ | Team 17 |
| Disks ➤ | 1 |
| Price ➤ | £9.99 |
| HD Install ➤ | N/A |
| Size ➤ | 1 meg |


TURRICAN 3 WILL TAKE YOU ON A JOURNEY THROUGH THE MOST DEMANDING LEVELS OF ADRENALIN-CHARGED ACTION EVER SEEN ON THE AMIGA.
TURRICAN® 3
AMIGA SCREEN STAR
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features include:
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All Amiga Graphics Modes Employed
50 Frames Per Second Scrolling
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Multiple Weapons Systems And Power Ups
FOR ALL AMIGA'S (inc 512K). SOON FOR AMIGA CD32™
Rainbow Arts
FACTOR 5
C1 Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, London E1 9SS © Rainbow Arts 1993 / Factor 5 1993. Published by Renegade

# ON THE Drawingboard

**He's back! The ant-like hero who adorned many Amigas last year has returned and this time he's brought his woman and dog with him. Jonathan Maddock takes a second look at the alien with attitude**

# ZOOL 2



Zool is perhaps one of the best platform characters that home computer gamers have seen for many a year. Just like Nintendo has Mario and Sega have Sonic, Zool has become the standard icon for the Amiga.

Zool arrived at just about the right time. Platformers were slowly losing their appeal and people were getting tired of cutesy game after cutesy game. The ant in the black silk pyjamas then exploded onto the scene and changed everything for the better.

OK, so the game was hyped to oblivion and looking back it was perhaps a fairly bog-standard platformer, but it contained an copious amount of style and appeal of which the games buying public had not seen since the release of Rainbow Islands.

The ninja from the nth dimension has become increasingly more popular and the question of a sequel has never been in doubt. Having completed his journey through the six levels in the original, Zool has to travel through a further massive nine levels.

These include Swan Lake, Bulberry Hill, Tooting Common, Mount Ices, Snaking Pass and more. All of the levels are going to be much larger and will feature a number of different ways of completion.



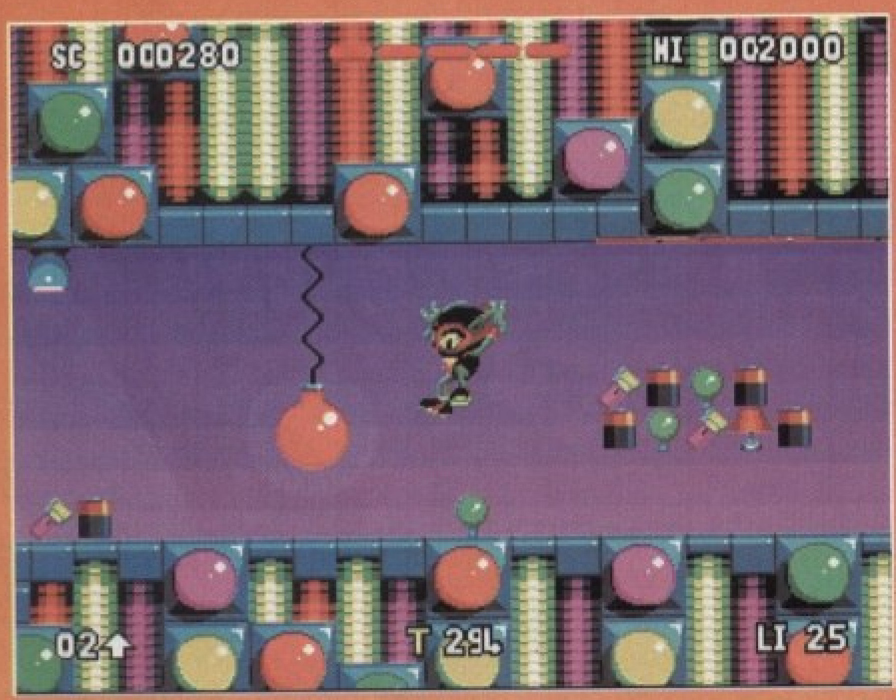
The general feel of the gameplay is very similar to the first incarnation, but the time limits have been made even tighter so that players won't have time to dawdle.

There will also be mega bonus items in some of the harder-to-reach areas of each level, these being worth maybe 20 times as much as a normal collectable and will be a genuine reward for the players who have skilfully negotiated the various hazards put in their way.

The enemies are once more related to the particular worlds they live in. For example, Swan Lake has a myriad of bird-like critters, all intent on your swift demise. This time, however, some of the enemies will need more than one hit. For example a puny sparrow on the Swan Lake level may only need to be zapped once, but a manic eagle may need three or four strikes.

The level guardian will always be Zool's arch-enemy, Mental Block, and he'll appear at the end of the final level in each world. Starting off in his normal cube-like state, he'll transform into a deadly killing machine that has some relevance to the level.

One such transformation sees Mental Block take the shape of a state-of-the-art jet fighter in Swan Lake World, whereby he showers Zool in a deadly hurl of missiles and bullets. Many nati






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2

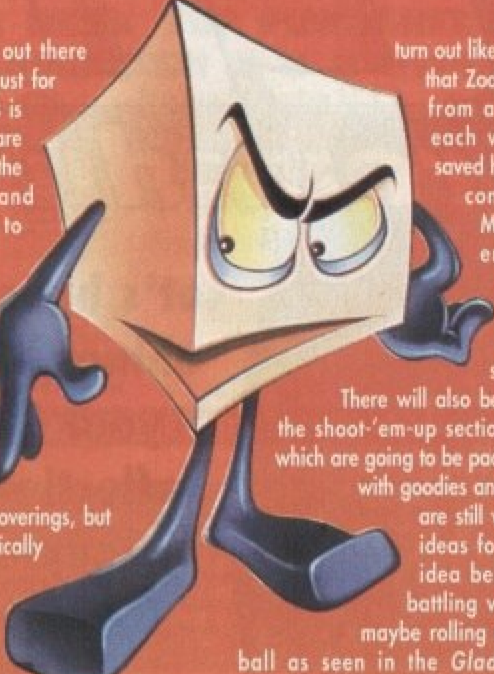
elevance

al Block
ighter in
Zool in a
ny naive

...d ill-informed people out there ...ink that computers are just for ...gh little boys. Well this is ...t the case because girls are ...ckly becoming part of the ...mputer revolution and ...emlin have seen fit to ...clude this fact in Zool 2.

You can either play ...s Zool or if you see ...t and fancy a bit of a ...ender change you ...n take on the role of ...ooz who is Zool's ...rlfriend. Zooz is able ...o spin and break ...rough weakened floor coverings, but ...ll perform almost identically ...o her alien boyfriend.

Zool has new and ...ecial abilities, including ...pert climbing skills. He ...n now shin up walls and ...ap from one vertical surface to another while ...rforming death-defying stunts.



Another new character is Zool's pet ...og called, ahem, Zoon. Being a dog of the alien ...riety, Zoon has two heads. One head is stupidi...y itself, always on the look out for food, drib...ling everywhere and generally annoying ...eryone.

The other end of the creature is highly intelli...ent, if somewhat disgruntled at having been ...ined at birth to such a half-wit. Gremlin's latest ...aracter is still under going changes, so god only ...nows how he'll be able to help and what he'll turn out like. One suggestion is that Zool must rescue Zoon from a hidden area on each world. If Zoon is saved he joins Zool for the confrontation with Mental Block at the end of world. Whether or not this will be implemented is still up in the air.

There will also be bonus levels (like the shoot-'em-up section seen in Zool 1) which are going to be packed full to the brim with goodies and bonuses. Gremlin are still working on various ideas for the sequel. One idea being Zool or Zooz battling with Mental Block, maybe rolling around in a metal ball as seen in the *Gladiators* television programme.

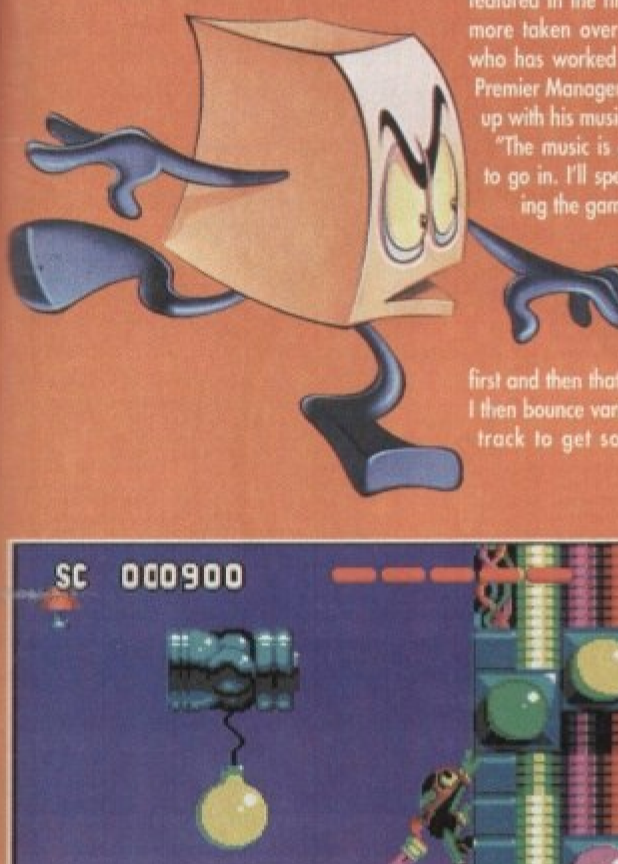
As well as gameplay getting a re-hash, the graphics and sound have both received a thoroughly deserved make-over. The Zool sprite and other characters have been made a lot cuter and friendly than those seen in the original.

For the forthcoming sequel there will be a different tune for each world rather than the just the one playing all the way through the platforming romp. Other new tunes will be added for the front and back end sequences. The option to choose between music and sound effects will remain.

Pat Phelan, the man responsible for the music featured in the first incarnation of Zool has once more taken over the reigns for the sequel. Pat who has worked on Lotus 3, Nigel Mansell and Premier Manager 1 and 2 explains how he came up with his musical masterpieces.

"The music is generally one of the last things to go in. I'll spend maybe a couple days playing the game to get a feel for it before talking to the programmers."

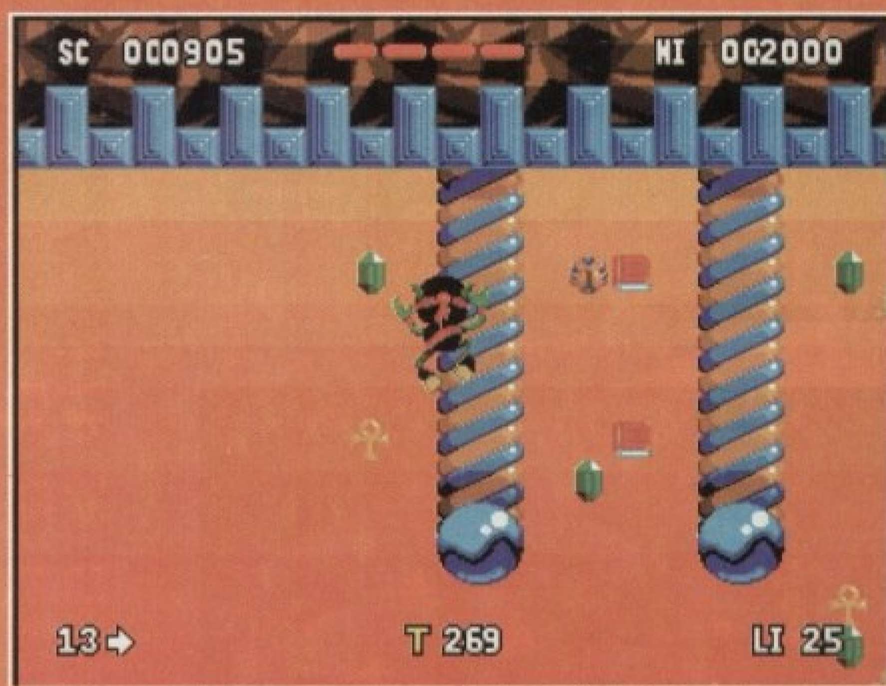
"I will then come up with a tune that I think will suit the character. It's usually the pulse that comes first and then that becomes the game's title track. I then bounce various ideas in and out of the first track to get some new, but similar pieces.

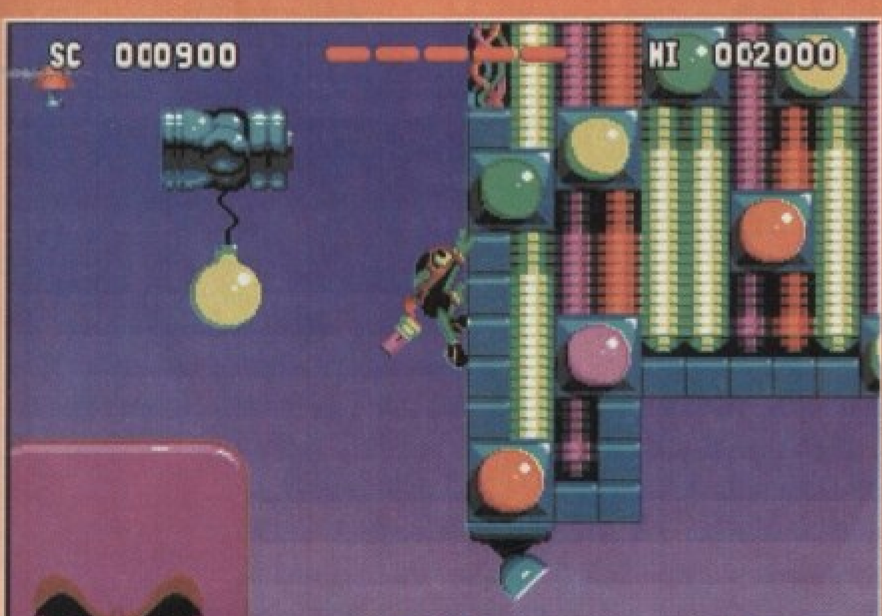


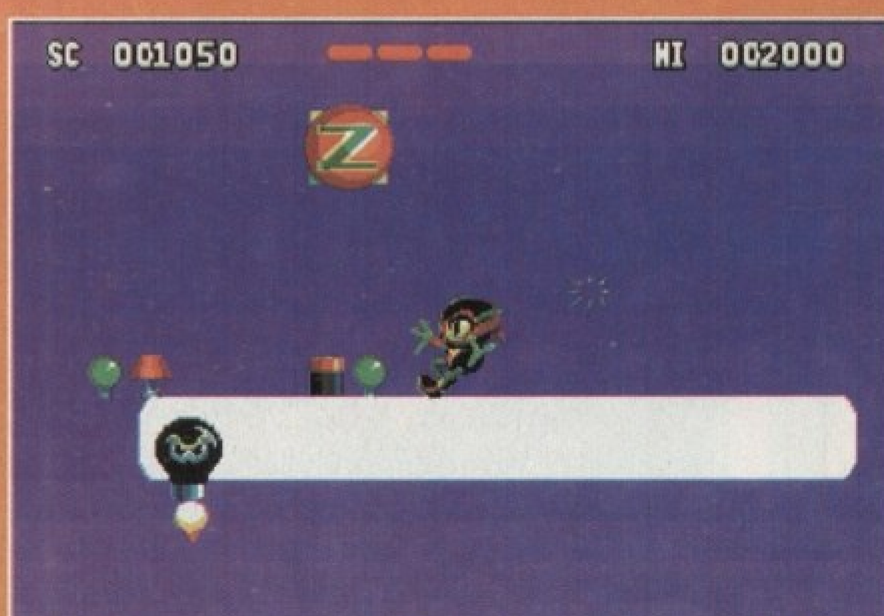


Eventually, I'll have an entire suite of music for the game."

So, there you have the low-down on Zool 2 which will become the number one game this Christmas (now there's a bold statement!). Forget about putting Jurassic Park on your list to Santa because the Amiga's best platform character is back with a vengeance.



# CD32 roundup

**Let's have a sheeny, shiney, digital see your face in it's reflection look at a couple of new releases for the CD32**

## D/Generation • Mindscape • £25.99

About a year or so ago, D/Generation hit your Amiga with a puzzle come blaster thud. Well, now the plazzta (new word for puzzle come action concept – like it?) is back with enhanced colour and chunkier sound.

You play the part of a postman come delivery boy, who has the gross misfortune of handling a package for a certain Mr Derrida.

Now, Mr Derrida is a top boffin working for Genoq, an organisation specialising in artificial Neogen organisms – genetically engineered lifeforms.

Unfortunately for some unknown reason the Neogen lifeforms have gone haywire and are destroying all life within the building.

It's at this point that you enter the scenario. After a long jet pack journey across Finland, the Urals and the entire length of Asia you arrive on the top of the office complex in Singapore – you've got a bloody good road map.

Landing on the roof of the building, you are surprised to find that nobody from the company is there to greet you. Entering the building your concern deepens when the security system tries to kill you and you find the receptionist cowering behind her desk.

She tells you that the package you've been carrying is of grave importance to Derrida and that it could be of grave importance to the whole of mankind's future – pretty important job on delivery boy's wages.

The main reason for this is the D/Generation. The A, B, and C generations are far simpler Neogens. However, the D/Generation project is an extremely advanced form of artificial life. It's capable of disguising itself as anything and has a hard dermal layer which renders it practically indestructible.

Beginning with five lives it's your humble task to work your way from the 80th level up to floor 90, where Derrida is waiting. On your travels you encounter various forms of the generation which go together with such things as security doors to compose the puzzle aspect. En route to find the professor you also find frightened employees who you must attempt to rescue.

D/Generation is a large and interesting title. The puzzles have a good mix to them so that you never become bored and because the logic involves using a laser, it'll keep kill frenzy addicts happy to.

As far as the CD32 enhancements are concerned, graphically the whole game has more clarity and looks brighter. The sound definitely benefits from compact disc quality and gives the whole scenario a real mood.

D/Generation doesn't push the barriers of the CD32 that far, but at the end of the day it's a fairly polished, playable product

**Overall: 82%**



**Oh, I do like your carpet**



**Our hero gets frazzled while yet another employee sits down on the job**

## Oscar • Flair Software

**GAMER GOLD**



**Oscar gets caught by the ghouls in Texas Chainsaw Massacre scare**

Along with Diggers, Oscar is the other title to appear in the launch bundle for the CD32. Now while Diggers set a president for size, sound and in-depth play, Oscar starts to show what the CD32 can do in the graphics department.

Strangely enough in Oscar you play Oscar, and the plot centres around the film industry's own accolode to its own – the Oscars. Oscar the character definitely falls under the category of cutesy, although defining which area of the animal kingdom he hails from is beyond me. He resembles a chipmunk with bits of human in him.

Anyway, whatever Oscar is or isn't, he loves the cinema. The show starts on one particular visit to his local multi-screen. The movies that are showing are the various worlds that Oscar must explore.

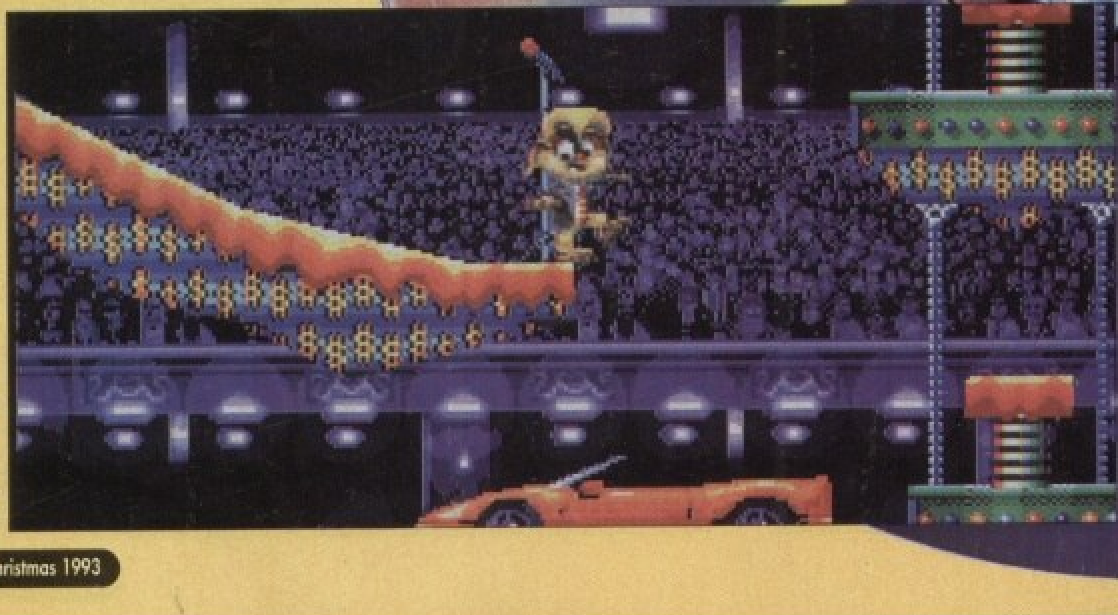
The CD32 version of the title features nine levels, two more than its A1200 counterpart. These vary from a Jurassic level through to a Horror Channel and a Sci-Fi Encounters level. One of the extra levels has very little to do with movies, but does have a strong connection with Commodore.

The aim of each of the levels, which comprise of three stages, is for Oscar to collect a number of miniature Oscars. Once he has completed this mission and collected the special letters which are scattered around he can move on to the bonus/bogus levels.

There are loads of nasties and power-ups which add to the fun and frolics. In many respects, Oscar has all the classic features of your platformer, but for one exception – it's better, both in graphics and playability, than the likes of Mario and Sonic could ever dream of becoming.

I could go on and on about the graphics, the samples and the sound in general. My advice to you is to go out and buy it. It looks and plays beautifully.

**Overall: 91%**

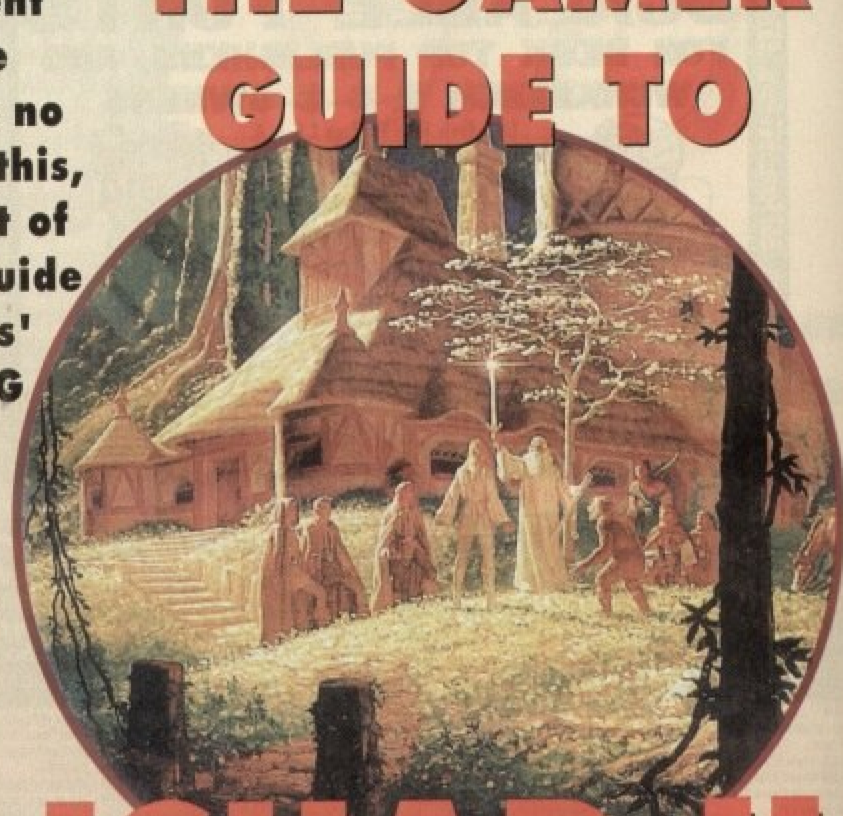


**Oscar dons his Noel Edmonds outfit in this gameshow "gotcha" stage**

# cheat mode

**Struggling with this excellent adventure game? Look no further than this, the first part of a two-part guide to Silmarils' raging RPG**

# THE GAMER GUIDE TO ISHAR II



## Irvan's Island

You begin very close to a fight – avoid this because otherwise you'll end up dead before you know it. Go west, then north. Enter the village. Play with the pump-handle if you like. Then recruit Kudsac, pick up his possessions and kill him (nice, eh?)

Visit the two inns to recruit four characters (preferably, pick a scholar – Eliandr, a magician – Zeloran, an archer – Fandhir, and a warrior). Buy a sword, a bow and arrows from the armourer and food from the shopkeeper to recover physical strength after fights.

Then go to the harbour (S-SW) and try to force your way onto the boat. You'll be taken prisoner and handed over to the village chief who tells you your mission.

Return to your starting point: S then E. Kill the three thieves and find the dead woman. Pick up the pendant. Eat some food if necessary (for physical recovery) then return to the village to recruit, and buy helmets and shields.

Go extreme East into the forest, then north to pick up black and white mushrooms, then dandelions (surrounded by stones) to the extreme north. Fight the wasps. Enter the forest clearing on the south side, kill the orcs and the chief orc (using arrows if possible). Pick up the necklace.

Return to the village, hand the necklace to the chief. Recover the boat. Eat, sleep, buy arrows, arms and food. Go to the harbour, select the town landing-stage.

## Zach's Island

Go right through the town to the library at the extreme north east. Pick up the fortress parchment. Kill as many enemies as possible (to gain money and experience).

Buy arms, helmets and food. Recruit if necessary, east and sleep to recover physical strength, then return to the harbour in the direction of the fortress.

## Akeer's Island

the wall on the right trying to keep moving east all the time. Fight the skeletons. There's a passage to the south – here you should pick up the treasure in the cul-de-sac and the south end and the skull in the cul-de-sac to the east.

Leave the passage again, continue east, then south. You'll come to a large room. Take the extreme SE, then S, E, and follow the corridor to the north to activate two handles – one on the right-hand wall, one on the left.

Continue due north into the passage, follow the corridor into the large room. Activate the handle on the wall to the north. Leave the passage again, take the extreme SE, follow the corridor and pick up a skull in the cul-de-sac. Re-enter the corridor with the handles. Walk round the W wall.

On the other side, enter the room, and pick up the treasure, skull and arms. Return to the landing-stage. Return to the town.

## Zach's Island

Buy fighting gear, arrows and as much food as possible, because big fights are coming. Buy two monk's habits and five fur coats from the clothes shop (not far from the harbour, in a road leading to a little square to the north).

Go to the library. Examine a parchment on potions. Go to the bank (W of the library), enter the street with guards. You must kill all the guards in one go (you can't make a return trip), using arrows and spells. Take the door opposite. Pick up 100,000po. Deposit 10,000po in the bank (on the other side).

Go shopping. Buy a magpie, a monkey, an eagle and a parrot from the pet shop (extreme SE of the town). Opposite is a super-armourer; depending on your budget, buy arms, helmets and shields. Go down to the south, after the bend. Buy five ropes from the shopkeeper.

Move W, buy potions for the "troublesome priest" (Humbolg) and "Ent Reviver" (Jablo... Continue to the W, and you'll come to three cross-roads. Go N, then W, then first E. Kill the giant guard (he's difficult to get rid of). If necessary, regain strength because there are more fights to come.

Enter the Blue Velvet night-club (only open at night). You'll get thrown in prison. Release the magpie through the bars. Pick up the key. Open the cell. Put on the five monk's habits. In the fortress take the passage (open between midnight and 4am).

Pass the monk. Enter the sacrifice. Recover the prison key from the monk's belt. Leave the passage















again. Find the invisible wall and cross it (where one of the characters notices a draught). Leave the prison. Fight the guards. Return to the harbour. You will need at least 10,000po and an iron shield. Take the boat for the island where you started.

## Irvan's Island

Go extreme E. Follow the E coast. Find a magician. Give him 10,000po, then send out the eagle. Pick up the mountain parchment.

Return extreme W, along the coast. Find the standing stones, continue to the W end. Pick up the relic at the foot of the standing stone. Golem wakes up. Kill him (most spells won't work on him). Turn round and fight Golem a second time.

Return to the harbour. In the direction of the mountains, take the landing-stage to the S.

## Jon's Island

In the mountains you must put on the fur coats (take off armour) and attach the ropes to avoid falling. Move E. Pick up the cauldron in the snow. Set off again in the opposite direction following the mountain road along the precipice. Go into the mountains. Find a rhinoceros. Kill it and take its horn.

Return to the landing-stage. Select mountains, landing-stage to NW. If necessary, make a return trip to the town for "repairs".

On leaving the harbour, travel E. Follow the coast, then take the passage to the W. Fight the two giants. Pick up the living sword in a mountain hollow. Leave the passage again.

Continue northwards. At the end, find a priest in a cul-de-sac. Prepare the Humbolg potion and give it to him. Pick up the tree island parchment.

Return to the harbour. Select the tree island. If necessary, make a return trip to the town for "repairs".

## Thorm's Island

Put on the pendant recovered from the dead woman. Take the crossroads to the left, then to the N, and second on the right. At the end, find an ent. Prepare the "Jablou" potion and give it him to drink; pick up the pendant.

Visit the huts; two open huts give various information. Return to the harbour, take the extreme E. Fights with Ewoks. At the end, pick up the relic. Return towards the harbour. Take N-E-N-E, follow the road: at the end is the iron shield. Pick up the magic shield (protects against fire).

Turn round. At the crossing, go N then E and first N. Fight with trails and aggressive eagles, to arrive close to the dead woman at the end to the W. Collect the key to the town hall from around her neck. Return to the harbour. Hurry.

## Zach's Island

Go to the town hall (extreme N-W). Enter the town hall and pick up the idol. Go to the temple (W of the bank) and give the idol back to the monk. Pick up the Air Elemental pendant.

Go on to the bank and draw out money. Buy arms and food. Eat and sleep... Keep 7,100po, then return to the harbour. Go to the fortress.

## Akeer's Island

Follow the left-hand wall, always moving N as far as the passage. In the circular corridor, take the invisible wall to the N. Follow the corridors to the N until you leave the catacombs. Find three weighing scales. Put exactly 3,550 po on the first two scales. Return to the catacombs. The water should have disappeared. Take the second to the SE. At the end, follow the small underground passage.

In the large room, activate the handle at the SE end. Take the treasure at the NW end. Put on the Air Elemenatal pendant. Continue to the NE end. Take the first turning to the right. Fights with mummies (fire-cloud and lightning are effective). At the very end, to the S, pick up a skull.

Return to the N. Take the access to the E. Stop in front of the wall, take the invisible wall to the S: pick up treasure and skull. Return to your initial position in front of the wall. Cross the invisible walls, still moving E. If blocked, take a side step to the S then continue E. Enter the prisons (you can find other treasures if you pass other invisible walls at the end of the maze).

Follow the corridor to the E, kill the lion-guard. At the eastern end, click the prison key in the lock. All the cells will open. Turn round. In the first cell to the right you can find treasures behind an invisible wall.

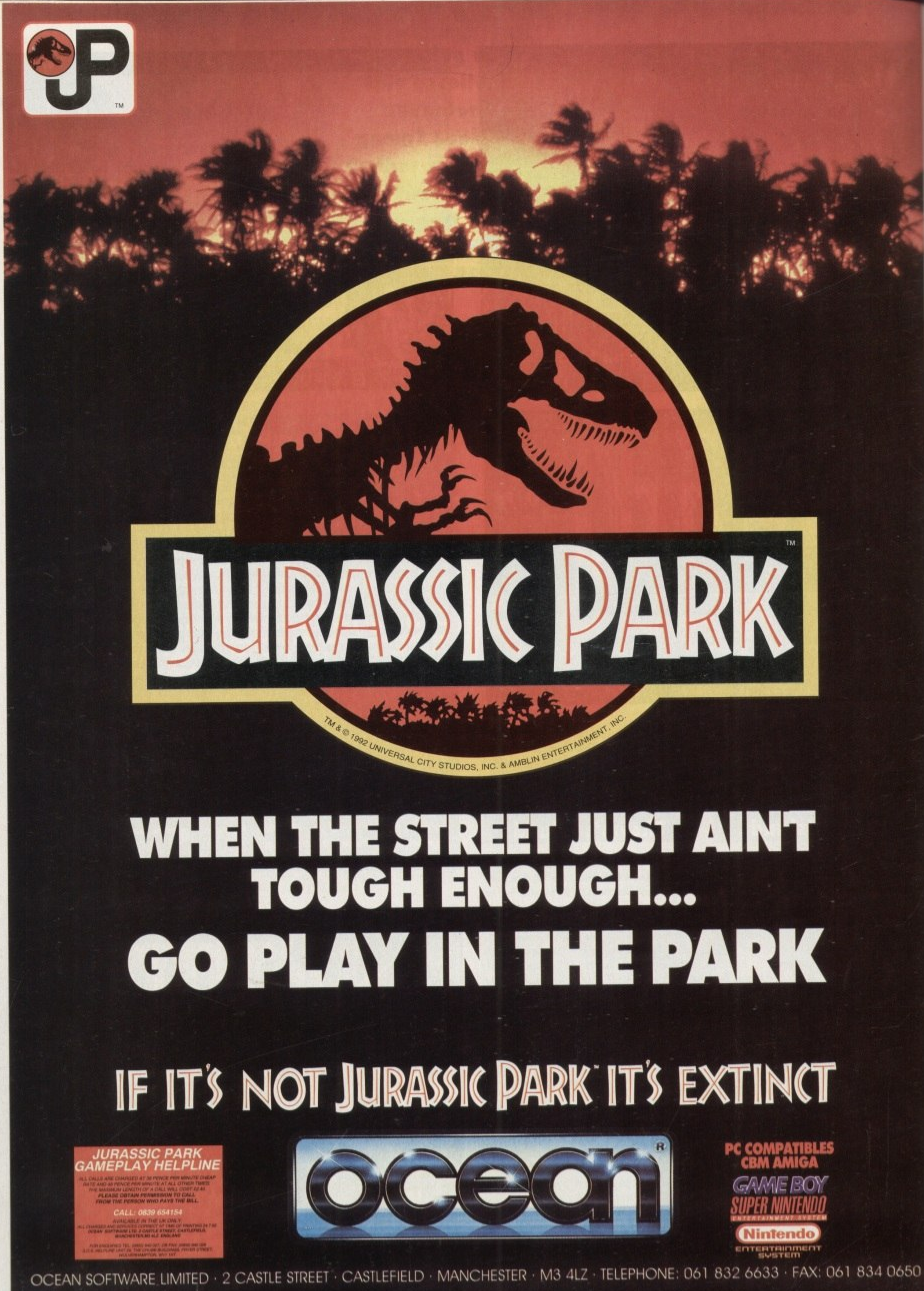
In one of the cells is a blind girl. You must recruit her, so you must dismiss one of the characters (archer or warrior). In the second cell to the S, starting from the W, is a secret passage through an invisible wall.

Follow the corridor and enter a vast room. Beware, this area is cursed; some characters will be inverted. To un-invert them you have to cast the curse-lifting spell.

Go to the middle of the columns and pick up the living sword. From the centre make return trips to the N, then S, then W. At the end you will find either invisible walls with treasures or a secret passage (click on the plate in the middle) with a handle to be activated.

Lastly, take the passage to the SE (beware of the hooks in the ceiling), pass the door, follow the corridor to the S. In front of the grille, release the monkey: open the passage. Reach the landing-stage. Select the entrance to the fortress again.



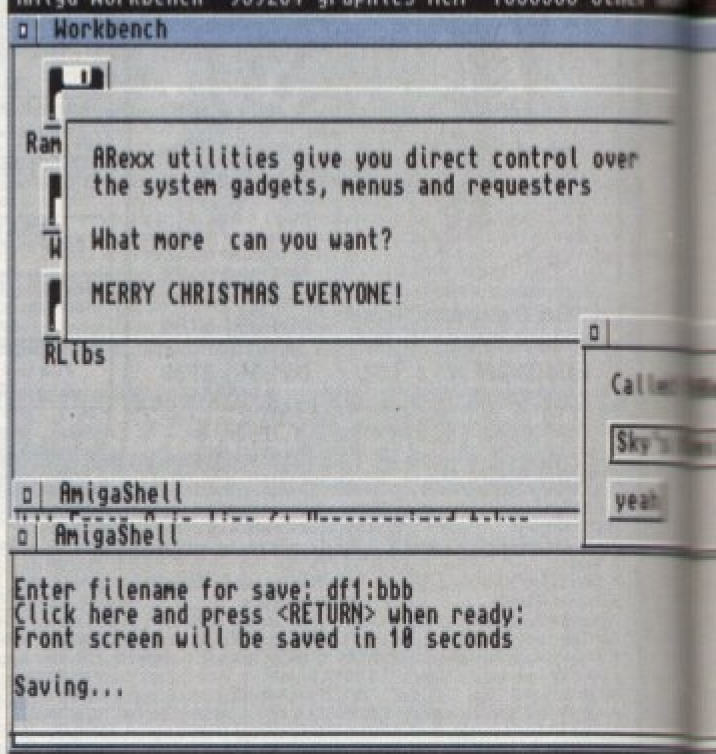


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AMIGA insight

## Expert views on the latest applications






# Speaking

This is the Christmas issue, and no doubt, as in Christmases past, many new Amiga owners will join the fold. Since it is now almost impossible to obtain an Amiga without hearing *something* about ARexx (unless the only thing you do with your machine is play games), I will take this opportunity to present a general overview of the language, its history and its basic principles.

Obviously, in a small space like this, I cannot hope to convey more than an impression of the language, and newcomers wanting a more detailed overview should obtain an introductory book on ARexx, such as the one reviewed below.

Several aspects of ARexx have also been discussed in these pages over the last two years, and the editor has even threatened to put them all on a CoverDisk, so if you think this would be of help, why not write in and tell him?

First, a bit of history. The earliest form of ARexx was a language called Rexx. It first appeared in 1983, created by IBM's Mike Cowlinshaw. Its purpose was to provide a good general-purpose utility language for IBM's systems.

Rexx was not originally designed to run on micros, but on large mainframe machines. Its design criteria were simplicity, practicality and usability.

Rexx did indeed turn out to be very simple and intuitive to use, despite its power and versatility. Its commands were English-like, and its overall "feel" was even easier to master than Basic It was also very good at handling data, especially data in text form. Rexx, incidentally, stands for Restructured EXtended eXecutor – just in case you wondered! This mouthful simply means that it is an executor (a control language), it is extended (has many new features), and it has been redesigned for better program structure.

This was in relation to Rexx's predecessors, among them a simple language called Exec, which, of course, should not be confused with the Amiga's "Exec" kernel.

Now, quite a few programmers took to Rexx, won over by its ability to make tricky and tedious jobs easy, and it became popular on many platforms. Yet all this was happening in the world of large machines and their arcane operating systems, and was of little, if any, relevance to the world of personal computing.

However, the popularity of Rexx would not let it stay confined to its birthplace, and eventually a few versions started to appear for the MS-DOS platform.

One of them, Personal Rexx, managed to attract a fair following, but even so, it was hardly a mainstream language; more of a little gem for those "in the know". Personal Rexx also provided an interface through which external applications could use the Rexx language as if it was their own.

This was probably the dawn of automation interfaces in the ARexx style. It meant that software applications could now share a common, powerful script language, and no longer had to supply their own, often inferior versions.

It also meant that software designers no longer had to reinvent the wheel each time they needed a script language for an application, and users didn't need to learn a different language for every different program they used.

### LESS EXPERIENCED

To get back to ARexx: I often cannot help feeling that one of the reasons that it still spooks less experienced users, is that it does so much.

After all it does four separate jobs, any one of which would be enough to rate it as a super-useful tool. ARexx does the jobs of a DOS enhancer, a typeless freeform utility language, a script language for applications and an interprocess communications system, all of which will now be examined in greater detail.

## Bill's vision

However, the first appearance of Rexx on a multitasking micro was due to a programmer called Bill Hawes, who had the foresight to see how well the Amiga and this new language could integrate.

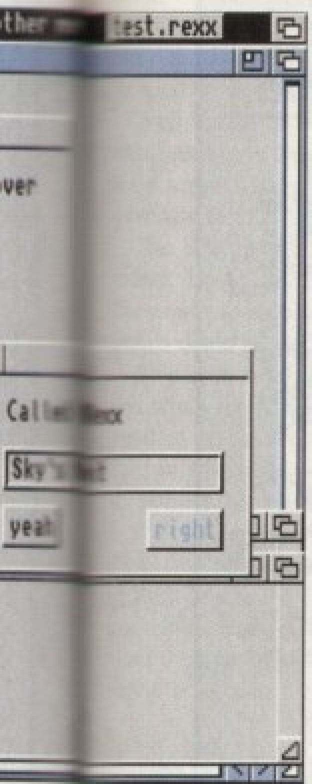
His implementation of ARexx on the Amiga, appearing in 1987, won a good following, especially among more serious programmers who appreciated its chore-lightening effects.

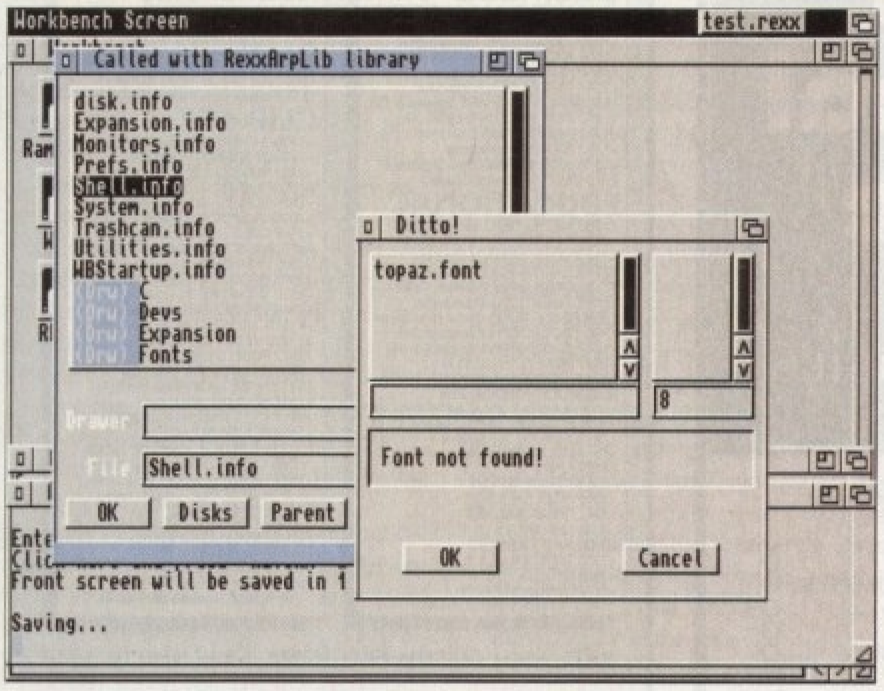
However, it was still some time before Commodore acknowledged the value of this contribution, and included ARexx in the Workbench 2.0 operating system. By then, enough software vendors had seen the advantages of ARexx to ensure that most major Amiga products had an ARexx interface.

In the meantime, IBM had not failed to notice the potential of Rexx either. Its popularity on the big machines led them to incorporate it into their OS/2 microcomputer operating system.

This is significant because OS/2 is a true multitasking system, like the Amiga's, and is in many ways superior to the hugely popular but awkward Windows.

In a sense, this justified Bill Hawes' vision of the language's potential. As OS/2 gains popularity, the Rexx family of languages could become quite important in the personal computing scene.






*Not only is it possible to call the system file and font requesters from ARexx, but you can also create your own custom gadgets*



# your language

**ARexx could be the Amiga's best kept secret. Alex Gian opens the lid on the language, its history and myriad of uses**

Firstly, ARexx's job as a DOS enhancer. Have you ever needed an AmigaDOS command to do a special job, but all you could find was a very rough equivalent that didn't really meet your requirements?

Perhaps it didn't have the options you wanted, or only did half the things you needed? Maybe you tried to write an AmigaDOS batch file to automate a task, but turned grey trying to figure out the weird control structures? Did you wish there was a simpler way?

There is, and it is called ARexx! Because it can work together with AmigaDOS, it's easy to devise custom commands, based on existing ones. You do not have to duplicate effort, just add your specifications.

Should you want something flashier than the CLI interface, you can use special libraries to link to the graphical Intuition environment, and add your own custom requesters, menus and the like.

Also, unlike regular interpreters such as Basic, you do not have to load up the whole language every time you want to run a program; once loaded ARexx stays inconspicuously in the background ready to be used as needed.

But ultimately, the main reason for ARexx's success is our second task, its flexibility as a programming language. After all, the grammar of a language and its links to the host system are two separate issues, and any old script language could have been bolted on.

Several script languages are already in existence as part of software packages, and if you have used any of them, you will know how limiting they can be.

ARexx, on the other hand, has all the features of a modern high-level language, and supports modular and structured programming.

Let me stress here that ARexx is built for comfort, not for speed. The speed of ARexx lies, not in how fast it runs its programs, but in how fast it lets you write them.

ARexx does not have separate data types, so you do not have to declare integers, floating points or arrays at the beginning of your program.

Everything is treated as a string of characters, and this simplifies things no end – and not just for the beginner! ARexx also has outstanding facilities for handling tables and arrays, with minimal effort on the user's part. Overall, it lets you approach all programming chores with a minimum of set-up requirements (for a detailed discussion of this, see the last two issues).

Some people feel that all this power can lead inexperienced users into pitfalls, but I think that this is far outweighed by the advantages.

Once they get into it, even people who have never programmed before are surprised at how much they can do. ARexx will support rigorous programming just as well as "quick and dirty" hacks to get a job done.

Many applications can benefit from the addition of a script. If you have ever sat in front of a screen performing repetitive actions with a mouse, and wishing that you could go away and let the machine do the job, you can see the advantages.

## CUSTOM COMMANDS

On the Amiga, the applications that make most use of ARexx are animation, graphics, modem communications and DTP. Obviously each application will specify its own custom commands – to simulate menu selections, for instance – and on the whole these will be different in each package and unrelated to ARexx. However, the control language that ties everything together (loops, IF statements, etc) is the same.

Finally, we have interprocess communication, which is the natural extension of scripts, and unique to the Amiga implementation. This allows programs to communicate with each other directly.

The best way to understand this is with some examples: A word-processor could control a DTP program, setting the text as soon as it is finished, a database could control some presentation software, giving impressive graphic updates of its contents, a modem could control a remote robot, and so on.

Well, I hope this has gone some way towards whetting your appetite about the ARexx beast, and maybe even given you some ideas for your own use. Thanks to the more seasoned ARexx users for bearing with me; we will recommence our more technical sorties from the next issue.

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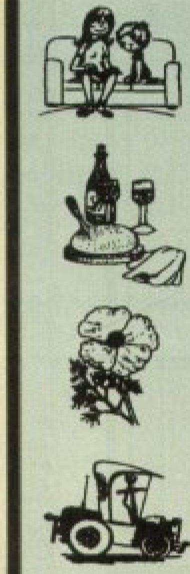
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# Choosing your crew

**Adam Phillips looks at recruiting in the second part of his epic serialisation of the video making story**

The script is finished. Everyone whose read it has congratulated you on its originality and excellence. Questions fly back and forth across the neighbourhood – some cynical; oh, you fancy yourself as a hot shot director now do you? – some irritating; really, how interesting! How big did you say your budget was? – others "endearing"; will you remember me when you're rich and famous?

Well maybe a touch exagerated. Pre-production is the next vital link in the chain of production. Many films may start with a solid script but go wrong through lack of real preparation and oversight on the part of the makers.

The first obstacle to overcome is how you want to shoot the video. This introduces the director's bible – the storyboards. These are made up from a series of boxes where pictures are drawn depicting each shot of the feature.

Beside each of these are descriptions of the individual shot and whatever dialogue or action happens within them. You don't need to be an accomplished artist to make up the storyboards. Simple stick-men style drawings are sufficient for producing something that you and your future crew can work from.

If you're still not happy with the results, get a friend to do them or simply construct a written shot list giving a description of each one in the film so, at the very least, you'll go on a shoot knowing exactly what shots you want, not necessarily how you want them to look. While it is important to remember that a clear vision is needed for any film, the storyboard is a guide not the final say. Due to the nature of a shoot where anything can happen, you'll find yourself making alterations whether it's due to weather, circumstances beyond your control or simply because you've changed your mind about how it is to be shot.

Don't be afraid to do this: The more research done at this stage, the better your instincts will serve you on the actual day and it will normally turn out to be right.



With the storyboard's finished, it's on to cast and crew hunting. If the production is small then yourself and a few friends can do it but if you're feeling brave and think that a more experienced crew and cast are needed then place adverts in the local newspaper for talent; try and get the local radio station to give you a little air time; contact amateur dramatic groups, drama schools and video clubs if there are any in the area.

It's always best to ask to see people's work via their showreels. A short interview to make sure they are enthusiastic and committed should be enough to give you a fair idea of what kind of person they are.

The same principle applies to the acting; auditions are sometimes not that useful. Nerves of the moment can help to produce a bad performance that does not do their talent justice.

The most important element to the selection process is the interview. The kind of rapport struck up between the actor and yourself is very important with regards to how well they'll receive instruction and how confident they are on set. Look after your actors; decent ones are few and far between.

If this all sounds a little nightmarish, don't worry – its layout is for a large scale amateur production. For the first few films, you may well decide to follow a more simple route using friends for all the roles – an ideal way to start.

● *Next month, we'll be taking a look at the creation of scheduling, call sheets and the first steps out with the camera.*

## Behind the scenes

If you've ever wondered what all those masses of jobs were in the credits of your favourite film, then here is the list for a "skeleton" crew.

Small crews generally work the fastest so keep numbers to a minimum by doubling people's roles up. It's best to take an extra person around with you as well to help lug gear and look after it when everyone is focused on their jobs, which are:

**PRODUCER** – In the real world, this guy or gal is the employer who hires and fires everyone including the director. They're the one who hunt money out of its hiding place to feed into the film.

**DIRECTOR** – Just the person who leads the team and calls the shots... easy life!

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** – The director's nanny. Helps with all the paperwork, drawing up schedules, crew lists and anything else which can be thought of.

Frequently seen standing round on the set with a clock casually saying " two minutes left for this shot" while everyone else runs round like chickens with their heads cut off.

Can be doubled up as a location manager who finds the different settings for your film and then gets permission to use them for free with their superb negotiation skills.

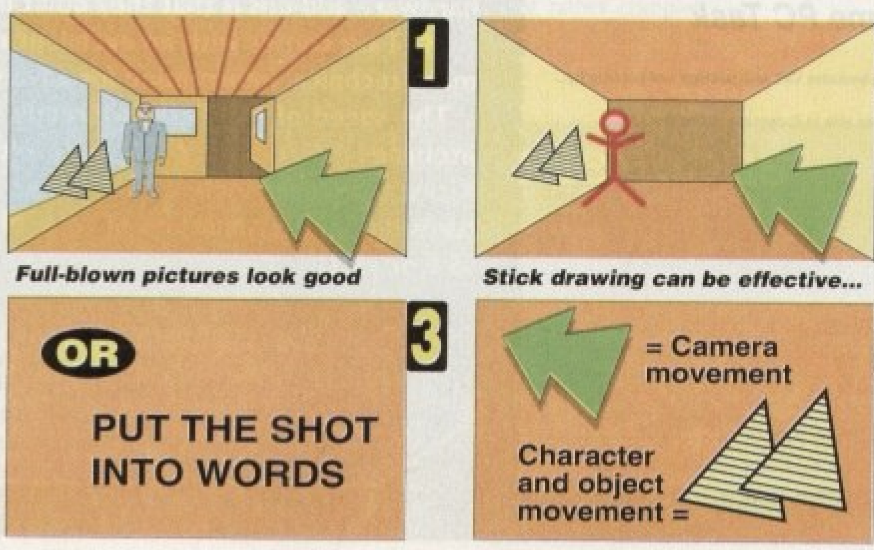
**LIGHTING CAMERA OPERATOR** – The eyes of the director. Good camera operators can bring their own ideas to the director's vision without stepping on anyone's creative toes.

They can also double as lighting designer, a much underestimated job – it's not just a case of whacking a few lights up and making it look like *Neighbours.*

**SOUND RECORDIST** – One of the most important jobs on the crew and rarely receives any recognition because they don't have a funky piece of equipment to strut around with. They can often make the difference between a professional or amateur production.

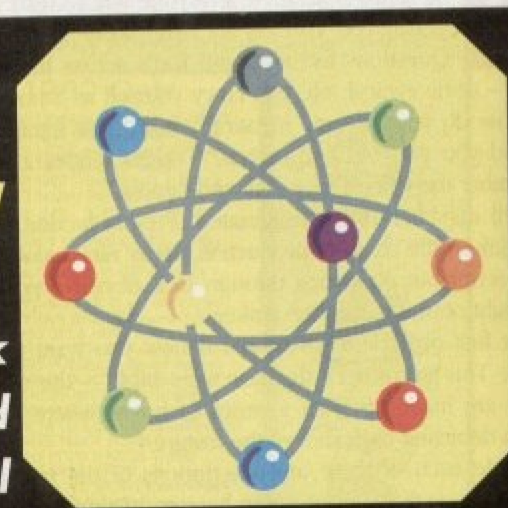
Also rolls the videotape and performs spot checks, which is looking at the previously shot image to make sure that there is no distortion or breaking up of the picture.

**EDITOR** – The person who makes or breaks a film. A bad video can be made to look excellent and vice versa by editors working their cutting room magic.




*The storyboards*

# Get it together with Fusion Paint!



Manual only £6.95

**Push your Amiga Computing CoverDisk software to the limit – learn just how hard you can make it work with this excellent manual**

**The Fusion Paint manual is both well written and comprehensive. The Quick Tutorial section takes you through every essential operation, from the Startup Window to Rubberbanding. This user friendly book also contains a detailed reference section, including paragraphs on menus and the collection of individual tools. The trouble shooting section provides invaluable assistance. It's a bargain at only £6.95.**

**Order form**

*Please send me Fusion Paint*

- ☐ The Fusion Paint manual at £6.95 including p&p (UK only)
- ☐ Overseas readers need to pay an extra £2 towards postage
- ☐ Australian readers can buy the manual for $20. Cheques should be made payable to Activision, 10 Agnes Street, Meadow Bank, Sydney, NSW 2114
- ☐ Cheque / postal order payable to The Disk Company
- ☐ Credit card (Visa or Mastercard) Expiry date ___/___

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*Send to Amiga Computing Fusion Paint Offers, Imediat, B3 Edison Road, St Ives, Huntingdon PE17 4LF, or if you are paying by credit card you can telephone 0480 496688. Allow 28 days for delivery.*

# Now you can run top PC programs on the Amiga

PC Task, the ingenious emulator that lets you run PC disks on an Amiga, can be yours for the exclusive price of only £39.95 including VAT and postage and packing, saving £10 on the normal retail price.

PC Task does not take over control of the Amiga and is quite capable of multitasking, it just becomes another application screen to be switched to when wanted.

The emulator supports two floppy drives as well as two hard disks and pseudo hard disks can be created as files on your hard disk. This feature allows the use of already created bridgeboard pseudo-hard disk files. You can also use a partition as a hard disk. And don't forget that the major advantage of software emulators like PC Task over hardware add-ons is that they don't invalidate your warranty.




Only £39.95 SAVE £10

PC Task comes with an excellent manual that keeps things easy to understand, plus more technical information for advanced users. There's also technical support.

The speed of PC Task is directly related to that of your Amiga, and the program includes EGA and VGA support. It is compatible with all Amigas running Kickstart/Workbench 1.2 or higher with at least 0.5Mb of RAM, although some features do need a minimum of 1Mb. MSDOS is not supplied. It is suggested that you use v5.0 or v3.3.

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# On your Xmas list

**As a prelude to the silly season, Paul Austin provides a concise buyer's guide to Amiga music software**



## Sequencers

Product: Bar & Pipes Professional 2
Manufacturer: The Blue Ribbon Soundworks Ltd.
Price: £299.99
Distributor: Meridian Distribution Ltd, 081-543 3500

Pro Midi product with unlimited tracks, built-in notation, software mixer, graphic editor plus an open-ended architecture which allows the addition of add-on sound processing tools, plus simple integration of complementary products from the Blue Ribbon range.

*Comment:* Highly recommended in all departments but especially useful for multimedia and DTV applications, with the release of Bar & Pipes Pro 2 making it the most flexible and arguably the most powerful package on the market.

Product: KCS Level II 3.5
Manufacturer: Dr T's
Price: £278.99
Distributor: Micro-Pace UK Ltd, 0753 551888

Tape recorder-style main screen. Real-time Tiger graphic editing environment offering complete control over all Midi data. Quickscore notation system. Automix real-time software mixing plus programmable variation generator and master editor providing the most comprehensive variation generation available via 16 screens of editing tools and definable variation parameters.

*Comment:* An all-round pro product which offers the most powerful and accurate sequencing environment on the Amiga. However be warned: This is very serious software designed to meet the needs of the most demanding studio musician/engineer. An excellent investment for the experienced Midi musician but perhaps a bit to much for the average punter.

Product: Sequencer One Plus
Manufacturer: Gajits Music Software
Price: £59.90
Distributor: Gajits Music Software, 061-236 2515

Offers a unique diamond editing system which means that all adjustment of Midi data whether it be note, control or program change can be achieved via a via a simple point and click system – making its editing environment extremely quick and easy to use.

*Comment:* A very good basic sequencer offering all the essentials if perhaps a little lacking in the frills. For the beginner or occasional user it's the perfect compromise between power and ease of use. However it does not offer the expandability and power features supplied by either B&PPro or KCS.

Product: TIGER Cub
Manufacturer: Dr T's
Price: £99.95
Distributor: Micro-Pace Ltd, 0753 551888

Although limited to just 12 tracks, TIGER Cub is still a viable investment with a proven track record plus real-time graphic editing and Quickscore notation printing.

*Comment:* Although rather superseded by more recent releases, TIGER Cub nevertheless offers a good introduction to the Dr T's family at a price the beginner can afford – just...

Product: MusicX
Manufacturer: Microillusions
Price: £24.95
Distributor: Silica Systems, 081-309 1111

Tracks run to 250, plus librarian, protocol, filter and keymap editors. Like all the sequencing packages mentioned, MusicX is happy to process Amiga samples in addition to normal midi data.

*Comment:* Although something of a golden oldie in Amiga sequencing terms, MusicX is undoubtedly the best value package on the market and offers a great opportunity for the beginner to test their musical ability prior to investing in a more modern package.

## Patch editors/ librarians

Product: PatchMeister
Manufacturer: Blue Ribbon Soundworks
RRP: £79.95
Distributor: Meridian Distribution Ltd, 081-543 3500

A generic librarian package which can be appended to either Super Jam or Bars & Pipes professional as either a standalone or accessory. Boasts support for most modern synths.

*Comment:* In relation to other packages Patchmeister offers a more accessible route into what can be a rather complex area. Due to its easy assimilation into the overall Bar & Pipes environment, it's the perfect compliment to Blue Ribbon Midi system.

Product X-OR 1.1
Manufacturer: DrT's
Price: £199.99
Distributor: Micro-Pace UK Ltd, 0753 551888

Boasts the most comprehensive support on the market with over 120 Midi devices catered for. In addition the software is completely programmable and can learn and remember your entire Midi setup ready for instant editing when required.

*Comment:* Alas like its parent program KCS, X-OR 1.1 is not ideal for the beginner, being designed to fit the needs of the professional who wants and will use its powerful if rather complex options.

## Miscellaneous

Product: SuperJAM 1.1
Manufacturer: Blue Ribbon Soundworks
RRP: £99.95
Distributor: Meridian Distribution 081-543 3500

The musical talents of six virtual musicians combine to provide an automatic song generation system which produces instant backing tracks with the band as a whole taking their leadfrom a selection of supplied and add-on styles.

*Comment:* Although perhaps not of great use to inspirational musicians, Super Jam can nevertheless be an invaluable tool for commercial musicians who are often called upon to produce large quantities of lift music quickly.

# Takes one to node one

**Phil South looks at life on the Internet, and answers a few questions about FTP**

If you're into comms then you'll be into the Internet. If not physically connected to it, like using CIX's feed, then you'll know about it, and will at least be able to send external mail over it.

But have you ever wanted to be more in touch with the Internet? I wanted to find out about setting up my own Internet node, and boy is it expensive. But there is a cheaper and much more enjoyable way to reach out and touch someone.

In the process of my investigations I heard that Demon Internet can connect you to the Internet with your own node for just £10 a month!

Yep, it's true and I got all the details. The minimum subscription period is just one month apart from the Mail Forwarding option (which I'll talk about in a sec) which is an annual contract.

The services include direct connection to the Internet, mail and Usenet news. A special comms program is needed for your Amiga, but this is downloadable from CIX or Demon.

The Standard Dialup service puts your computer on the Internet with your own Internet address. File transfer (ftp) directly to and from your computer, download/upload mail and news, telnet and ftp all at the same time, by a process called multiple sessions.

You get a full read/write Usenet news feed. You can also have multiple mail addresses from your machine too, like:

```
<snouty@snouty.demon.co.uk>
<phil@snouty.demon.co.uk>
<postmaster@snouty.demon.co.uk>
```

Demon stipulate that even thought you have multiple addresses, "mail must only be processed on the computer connected to us and not passed on to other computers for composing or reading." Gee, why not?

There is a once only set-up fee of £12.50, and from then on a fixed price of £10 a month. There are no on-line charges or charges for mail and the like. Once you are connected to your nearest Demon "Point of Presence" (PoP) you pay no extras.

Right now you can connect to PoPs in London, Warrington or Edinburgh. Payment for home users can be made monthly in advance by Access or Visa credit cards. You may pay annually by cash, cheque or credit card the yearly fee of £120, which is handy if you don't own a credit card, like me.

Oh yes and the best bit. Mail Forwarding is as I said – for an extra annual charge you can add a little something to the Standard Dialup Service, allowing you to use your own domain (like for example "snouty.com").

This extra service costs a mere £200 per year, payable in advance. But think about it... phil@snouty.com... damn, I like the sound of that. Oh yes, and technical support for Internet customers is available Monday to Friday between 9am and 9pm and Saturdays between 9am and 6pm. Just think, a mere £320 and you can have your own customised Internet address.

Many thanks to Giles Todd of Demon Internet for all the above information. Now all I've got to do is find a spare £200 to have my own domain...

● *Demon Internet Ltd, 42 Hendon Lane, Finchley, London N3 1TT. Telephone: 081-349 0063/031-552 0344 or email internet@demon.net*



## Get online

If you have a comms question, then please write to Phil South, Amos Insight, Amiga Computing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. Or take the easy way and email Phil as:

```
snouty@cix.compulink.co.uk
```

# Q and A

## Picking up from a satellite server

I'm open for enquiries on the Internet, CIX, and all matters BBS, so why not send me a note by snail mail or email? This month's question is from Christopher Rea on CIX. He wants to know how to get the satellite pictures from Imperial College via CIX. He said he'd tried to use a Gopher server but it didn't deliver the goods. Well, Chris, they rarely do. I always prefer to wade in manually and surf the Internet by hand. It's easy. From the MAIN: prompt on CIX, simply type:

```
run internet
```

then at the ip> type:

```
ftp src.doc.ic.ac.uk
```

When Imperial College asks you to log in type:

```
FTP
```

and when it asks for your password type:

```
crea@cix.compulink.co.uk
```

and you're in. Use cd and dir to find your way to the weather/pics directory as described in the mag. Then when you find the gifs or jpeg files in the directory (I think it was mentioned in the mag) you type:

```
get uk1.gif
```

or whatever the file name is. This sends the file to CIX from IC. Then when you got all the files you want you QUIT out of the IP by typing:

```
quit
```

then you are at the ip> prompt again. Do a dir to see what files you got. Then SEND them from CIX to you by typing:

```
send *.*
```

which will send all the files to you one by one. You can use ADPro or ViewTek (on a Fish disk) to look at the pictures.

# Sort it aht!

**Phil South looks at the Amos Sort function, plus a few more coding widgets**



One of the most common computing operations known to man is the sort. You take a list of numbers or letters and sort them into a specific order either first till last or last till first.

This doesn't take a great deal of artificial intelligence, as most of the things on which these decisions are based is mechanical: Does this word start with an A or doesn't it? That kind of thing.

In the past we've had to construct our own sorts from other commands and make them do the job. But Amos is an exception yet again, as it has a built-in sort function.

OK so it's not very smart and in order to get it to sort anything in a fancy way you've still got to resort to some fancy programming, but nevertheless it works and it saves you a lot of time if all you want to do is stuff some strings in an array and belt them out the other end as soon as possible and in rank order.

Using SORT is easy, all you need is a variable for it to act upon. The variable it acts on is always an array. An array, in case you never studied Basic in college, is a variable which holds more than one value in a number of electronic pigeon holes. It does it like this:

```
Sort a(0)
Sort a$(0)
```

like that. In these examples a and a$ are arrays, the first obviously containing numeric data (numbers) and the second containing alphanumeric data (letters) otherwise known as strings.

The SORT function returns your array in a sorted form of ascending order. This means 1,2,3,4,5... rather than descending order which would be ...5,4,3,2,1. In the case of words or letters alphabetical order is the order of the day.

This function works in the same way in both Amos Pro and regular Amos. An allied function is MATCH, which searches an already sorted array for a specific value. When it finds the value it puts the index (the location in the array) into a variable which you can retrieve later.

So a basic array loader goes like this:

```
Dim I(10)
```

First DIMension the array, in this case ten numbers. Then set up a loop to fill the array with numbers which you input:

```
For A=1 To 10
  Input I(A)
Next A
```

When you get to the bottom of the list, the numbers you put in must be displayed. If you do this:

```
For B=1 To 10
  Print I(B)
Next B
```

then each number you put in will be printed in the order you put it in. Fine. But what if you wanted them sorted into numerical order? Simple:

```
Dim I(10)
For A=1 To 10
  Input I(A)
Next A
Sort I(0)
For B=1 To 10
  Print I(B)
Next B
```

Same again really, but notice how SORT is used to arrange the array into order, no matter what wacky numbers you slap in. If you want to type in fractions you'll have to specify a floating point array with the # or 'hash' symbol, as in this more finished example:

```
Dim I#(10)
Screen Open 0,640,200,16,Hires
Flash Off : Curs Off : Paper 0 : Cls 0
Print "Please give me 10 numbers..."
For A=1 To 10
  Print "Number ";A; : Input I#(A)
Next A
Sort I#(0)
Print : Print "The sorted figures are
as follows..."
For B=1 To 10
  Print I#(B)
Next B
```

As for using MATCH, well it's very easy. MATCH fills a variable with the location of an item in an array. If it finds the item then it loads the index into the variable:

```
X=Match(I(0),4.5)
```

for example looks for a value of 4.5 in my array from the previous program. If it finds it at I(3) for example, it'll put the number 3 into X. I can then use:

```
Print I(X)
```

to refer to that location in the array. You could do a devilishly slow sort this way, by searching for lower and lower numbers and any numbers you find being put into another array in reverse order.

Incidentally if MATCH doesn't find a match for its searched for figure or letters, it'll return a minus figure, so this is easily scanned for and ignored.

To reverse the order of a sort more simply do this:

```
Dim I#(10)
Dim I2#(10)
Screen Open 0,640,200,16,Hires
Flash Off : Curs Off : Paper 0 : Cls 0
Print "Please give me 10 numbers..."
For A=1 To 10
  Print "Number ";A; : Input I#(A)
Next A
Sort I#(0)
D=1
For C=10 To 1 Step -1
  I2#(D)=I#(C)
  Inc D
Next C
Print : Print "The re-sorted figures are as follows..."
For B=1 To 10
  Print I2#(B)
Next B
```

The magic occurs when we let I2#(D)=I#(C). What we are doing is counting down through the original I#() array with the FOR/NEXT loop, and feeding each figure into the I2#() array from 1 to 10 by INCrementing the array index as we go. Neat eh?

## Write stuff

If you have an Amos programming problem or neat Amos trick you want to share with the world, then please write to Phil South, Amos Column, Amiga Computing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

## Write a program!

**This is the part where I set you a bit of homework. For starters, can you figure out a way to align the floating point numbers so the decimal points line up? I'll give you a clue – look into using LEN, and LEFT$, MID$ and RIGHT$. Wink.**

**For the big project how about this: Try to write a program which takes in a list of names and allows you to sort them, and also search for a particular name.**

**Use flags to attach a small text file to the name and load it from disk. Package it all together and you've got yourself a database program!**

# Standing on solid ground

## What is a template and why are they so important? Ben Pointer draws his conclusions



There is no substitute for a well presented document where each page consistently looks like it belongs to the previous one. On the same theme, if your document is a periodical – that's a document issued on a regular basis – it is again important that each issue has a similar style to the previous one.

But this consistency should not be at the expense of speed. Deadlines still have to be met, so a method like templates is needed, a foundation on which you can base the pages in your document.

There are a couple of ways you can employ templates. One is to use a page template within a document as the basis for every page created, and the second is the template document.

The former template is essentially a page that is not printed but contains all the "furniture" that you will have on each page thereafter — furniture being elements that are used regularly by a particular document – the page number for example, the name of the document or the chapter title, and any graphics that are repeated from page to page.

By having these on a template you can create all the pages for your document with these elements already present on the page in the same position and in a consistent style.

Achieving a consistent style will require other tools, like tags, and in ProPage at least you can pre-tag text on your template so that when you load text into a box the new text will automatically acquire the tag.

This isn't the case in PageStream because elements from its version of a template, the master page, cannot be edited on any other page other than on the master page itself.

Now so far I have applied this to a single template page, but in both PageStream and ProPage the template page can be two pages, a right and left, or odd and even if you prefer.

### DOCUMENT TEMPLATES

In ProPage you always have an odd and even template, in PageStream you can set whether you want the one master page, or a right and left master page, when you create a new document.

Although the two programs can work with both left and right templates, they use different methods of creating the pages from these templates – hardly surprising as they do most things differently.

In ProPage each page has to be created manually, in PageStream your pages are already there for you when you create a new document.

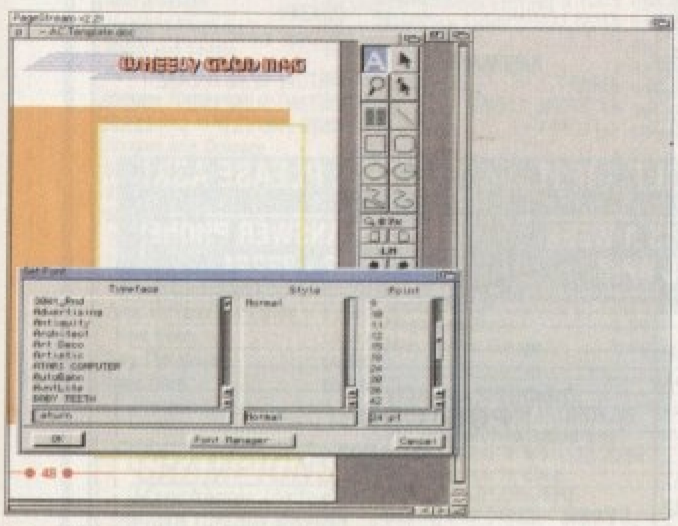
What is important is the way the two programs use the templates. In ProPage you can lay out the elements on your template and create a page from this, either a single left or right page or, in facing pages mode, both right and left pages at once. By specifying boxes linked, text can be flowed from page to page until either all the pages are filled or the text runs out. In PageStream, with the pages already created, you do not create a page from a master. Rather, you add your elements to the master page and these will appear on the corresponding pages in the document.

So if you are working from a single master all pages in the document will contain these elements, but if you are working with left and right templates, by adding a element to a right-hand master page, all right-hand pages in your document will also have these elements.

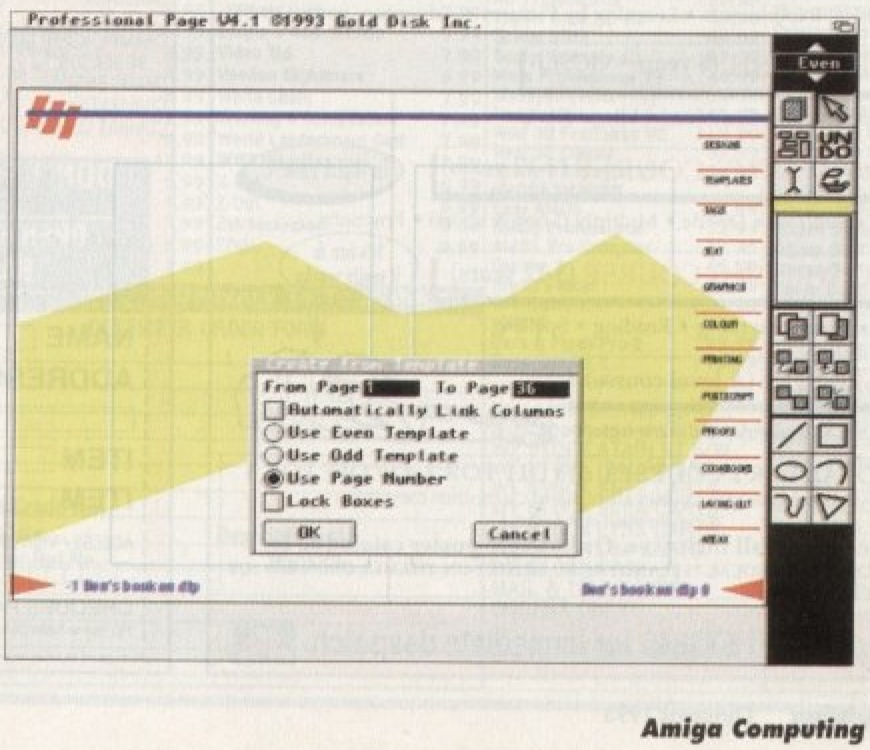
PageStream does not enable you to edit any of the elements from the master page on a page within the document. So if a graphic element is not required on a certain page in your document the only thing you can do is delete it on the master page, in which case it will disappear from all pages in your document. Or you could cover it up with another box. Template pages are not the end of the story. Template documents are also very useful. A common example is the humble letterhead. By creating one and saving the document as a template it can be used as the basis for all your letters, making the task in a DTP package simple as all the decorative elements are in place with only the individual text to be imported.

ProPage goes one step further, enabling you to save single pages and load them into a current document. This is useful when there are elements in one document you want to be present in your new document. PageStream does enable you to append documents, so you could fudge something similar.

If you get the feeling that templates are vital in document creation, you're right, they are. But more than anything they make the designer's job much easier and quicker, which is why most wouldn't be without them.



**_PageStream can have two types of master page: A single master, which is the base for all the pages in your document, or a left and right master page. Objects that are placed on a master page cannot be edited within the document_**




**_ProPage 4 enables you to work on facing pages, so one or many spreads can be created very easily, like this one here that is made up of two pages, an odd (right) and even (left) page_**

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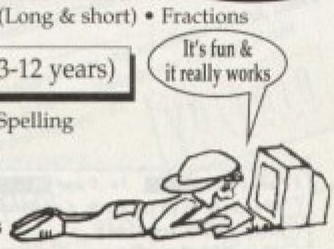
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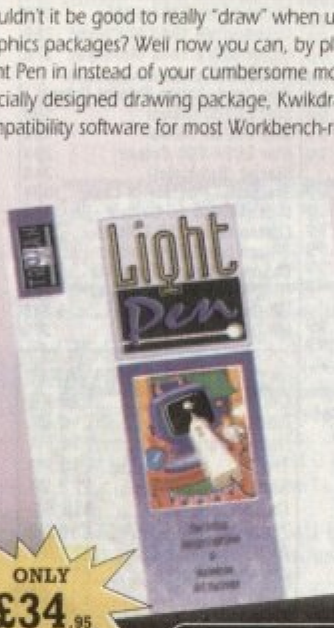
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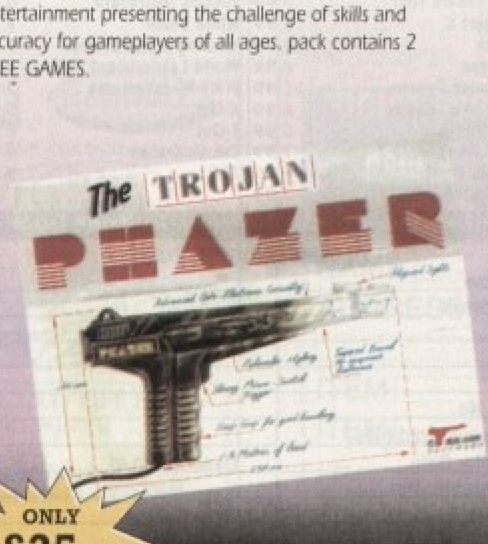



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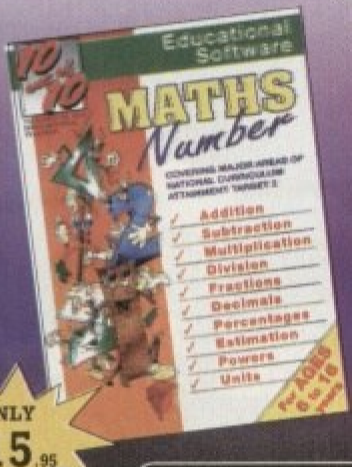
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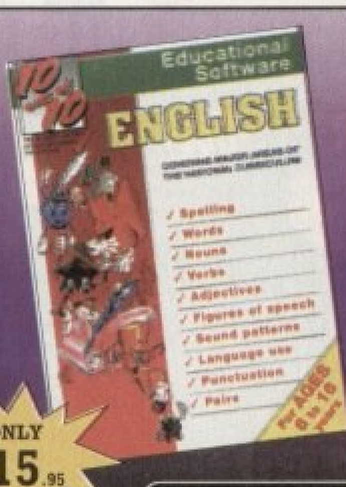

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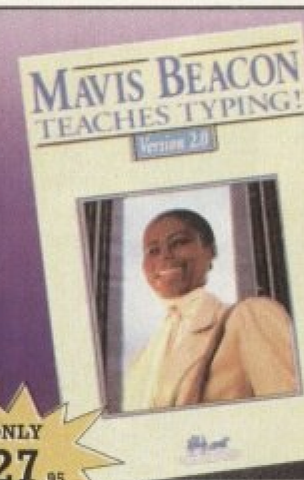


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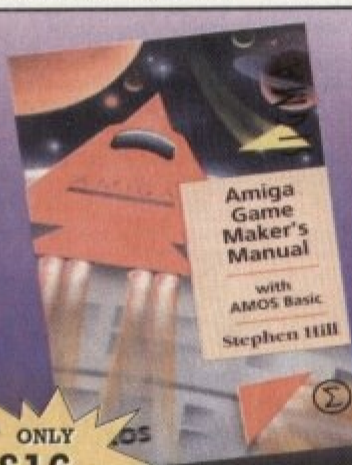



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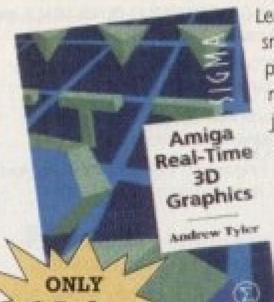
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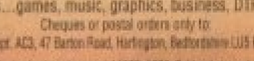
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◆ A1200 contacts wanted 100% reply. Jon Landaas, Bekkesiringen 12, 5030 Landas, Norway.

◆ MBx12001 68881 14MHz 0Mb expansion board for the 1200. Offers, Tel 0902 453985.

◆ Amiga software for sale Tel: 0452 304599.

◆ A600 for sale, joystick, 64 blank disks £300. Tel: 0698 745174.

◆ Amiga contacts wanted. G.Silva, R-Project, Boavista Lote 12, 2475, Bendita, Portugal.

◆ Amiga 500+, £150. Tel: 0626 774605.

◆ Fax machine Trolley. White finish. Tel: 0268 682191.

◆ Amiga contacts wanted. Shafi 5 Gamsaclose, Athelone 7764 S. Africa.

◆ Philips monitor CM8833Mk2, £140, Wordworth V2AGA, £45+games. Tel:0616264175.

◆ Wanted Amiga ROM Kernal manuals (libraries include devices). Tel: 0329 280975.

◆ Amiga 500 WB2.3 2meg external drive, Action replay MK3, original software XCopy. Cyclone software, hardware, joystick, mouse, mauals, still boxed as new, £275. Tel: 0934 628853.

◆ A500 GVP 52Mb 2Mb RAM £210, Action Replay MK3 £35. Tel: 0277 264725.

◆Amiga 1500mbHD 5MbRAM VXL-30 accelerator Flicker Fixer, Genlock W.B.2.0. Tel: 0947 820008.

◆ A1200 with 80Mb hard disk. Commodore 1960 Multisync with external speakers cost £900 will accept £600. Miracle keyboard and software £100. Tel: 0579 370257.

◆ PD contacts wanted. Andrew 17 Ashfield Road, Hemsworth, Pontefract.

◆ Contacts wanted 100%. Paul 39 Madryn St, Liverpool, L83TT.

◆ Overseas contacts wanted. 28 Chruchfield Ware, Herts, SG12 0EP.

◆ Brilliance £100. Tel 0773 810660 Kev.

◆ A500+ 6Mb RAM GVP HD8+II 52 Mb Hard Drive Games and graphics, software (including Real 3D), manuals and fully boxed, £360. Tel: 0742 737698

◆ A1500, 80Mb GVP H/D, 9Mb RAM, 1081 monitor, WB2.04 software, joystick, ten blank disks, excelent condition, £700 o.n.o. Tel: 0902789448.

◆ GVP A530 Comb 120Mb H/D with 1Mb RAM, £450. Also Philips CM8833 colour monitor. Tel: 0277 222294 (Graham).

◆ Manuals, sale, swap. Ralph: 0767 40088.

◆ Apex Copier, £20. Tel: 0865 69189.

◆ A1200 60MbH/D boxed with Microprose F1, Grand Prix and other software, £400. Tel 081 594 8450.

◆ CDTV etc sale. Tel: 0341 281160.

◆ PCMCIA 4Mb RAM expansion A600/1200, £95. Tel: 0785 44805 (after 5.30pm).

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◆ Wanted: 2nd hand disk drive. Tel, Jack: 02703857387.

◆ New A1200+(official upgrade) 85Mb HD, Philips monitor, Star LC24-20 Printer+software. Worth over £700 including Wordworth Accounts II, Syndicate, Goal, Flashback, etc, £800 o.n.o.Tel 081 203 8875.

◆ Wanted: 1Meg 1 x 8 Simms. Tel 0472 875447.

◆ IBM contacts list to: Dennis, 13/18 Lawson Lodge, George Ave, QLD, Australia, 4218.

◆ Graphic Artist. Tel, Sterling: 0816773110.

◆ 68882 for A530 £150. 1Mb Simm. for A530 £40. Tel, Nick:0275 871850 (evenings).

◆ A2000+ WB2.04 5M RAM GVP 80Mb ADSPEED Fax Modem, 1084 monitor, extra drive, various software, all manuals £550 o.n.o. DIGVIEW camera & stands, £200 o.n.o. Tel: 0666 826148 (evenings), 0272 363564 (daytime)

◆ A500, 2Mb + more. Tel: 0753 671623.

◆ 9 pin B&W Printer, £50. Tel: 040622774.

◆ A1500 2.0 (1Meg) + DPaint 4, £50, GVP HC8 120Mb + 6Mb fast RAM, £250, 10845 monitor, £100. Tel, Mat: 0222 691340.

◆ SY22/TE33 contacts. Tel: 0724 764050.

◆ CDTV disk drive, no keyboard, swap for HD for A500 GVP. Tel: 0670 712691.

◆ Modem Miracom Courier U32 HST, excelent condition, under 10 years old. Offers around £200. Tel, Joe: 0775 713079.

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V1209 .............. GNU C++ COMPILER
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❑ ^ + **V778 RAYSHADE v4.0** Complex Ray tracing package. 2Mb **(3)**

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❑ ^ + **V784 AREXX (2)** disks which contain Arexx programs & examples

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❑ ^ + **V952 x-BENCH v1.0 (2)** Complete solution to the replacement Workbench. Contains LastHope, View, Virus Checker, Power packer & DCopy2

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❑ ^ * **V976 WB v2.04 UTILITIES 6** Next collection of WB v2.04+ utilities.

❑ ^ + **V977 FILE & HD No 5-6** Next Excellent collect of HD utilities. **(2)**

❑ ^ + **V979 NCOMM v3.0** Is a communications program based on Comm v1.34 with lots of very nice enhancements

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❑ ^ + **V994 THE MONEY PROGRAM v1.5** Features include upto a maxium of 60 accounts, upto 50 direct paymenys.

❑ ^ + **V1000 GRAPHPRO v1.0** Written with Amos pro by David Jordan. Basically takes a set of data, plots them on a graph.

❑ ^ + **V1001 VMORPH v2.21** Will allow you to create smooth morphs/warps bet-ween two different images over a period of frames to create an animation.

❑ ^ + **V1002 RAMOS PRO v1.12** If you have Amos Pro then this disk will make your programs Boot without the program

❑ ^ * **V1003 NICKPREFS** is an enhancement to WB 2/3 which adds 3 new preferences WBPicture, BuzyPlonter & Floppy.

❑ ^ ^ **V1005 WORKBENCH 3.0 UTLS** Contains the fist batch of A1200 and A4000/ 030/040 Utility programs.

❑ ^ + **V1009 TURBO TEXT v1.1** Excellent Word Processor. Very impressive version

❑ ^ + **V1013 POOLS PREDICTION** A helping hand with the Pools

❑ ^ + **V1016 OCTAMED v2.1** Music editor which was designed for making music.

❑ ^ * **V1017 POST v1.86** An excellent Postscript interpreter for the Amiga which implements the full Adobe language **(3)**

❑ ^ ^ **V1021 (AGA) SCREENS** Enhance your Workbench disks backgrounds with theses nice full coloured pictures

❑ ^ + **V1022 LITTLE TRAVELLER v1.1** Shows a world map & you can select any country for travel information, Zooms up another close up map with more detail.

❑^ + **V1023 QUIZ** Contains Questions & Answers with the option to add

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❑ ^ * **V1034 ADM v1.01** Flexible address database with loads of great features.

❑ ^ ^ **V1037 (AGA) A1200 WB HACKS** An excellent collection of Utilities & Hacks

❑ ^ + **V1038 AMOS PRO UPDATER v1.11** 1st Update to the Amos Professional

❑ ^ + **V1039 HARD DISK INSTALL** If you need to install your A1200 HD then you need this. Workbench 3.0 also requires disk V1075

❑ ^ + **V1040 bBASEII v1.3** An easy to use, versatile, yet full featured database. Greatly enhanced successor to bBASE II.

❑ ^ + **V1041 DIGITAL BREADBOARD** Full featured digital circuit simulator

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❑ ^ + **V1044 FANCY PRINTING** Banner, Graph Paper v1.2 and Disk Print v3.59.

❑ ^ + **V1045 uDRAW v1.0** Provides a mechanism for the rabid drawing of schematic diagrams. Bitmap oriented

❑ ^ + **V1046 THE XI RAVE SAMPLES** Grarett Watt's IFF 808 State samples

❑ ^ + **V1048 HAM-8 VISTAS (2)** Collection of Ham-8 Vista drawings

❑ ^ + **V1051 EASY CALC v1.0** A spread sheet designed to be both easy to use and fast. Built in excellent help system.

❑ ^ + **V1054 ADVANCED UTLS 2** Compress Disk doubles the capacity of your D on the fly with compressions. Also DiskOptimizer, SCSI Mount and more.

❑ ^ * **V1055 PARBENCH** All the software you need to hookup 2 Amiga's or CDTV's.

❑ ^ + **V1056 DEVELOPER** Contains the official Commodore developers Kit for the Amiga Guide & install utilities.

❑ ^ + **V1057 EDPLAYER** Music MOD player that looks, acts & plays like a CD

❑ ^ + **V1058 3D GRAPHICS** Several 3d moddeling/ray tracing programs

❑ ^ + **V1059 GRAPHICS** Create stunning graphical images. MPath creates swirling galaxy images. Roses, Rayshade

❑ ^ + **V1060 CIRCUIT BOARD DESIGN** Includes mCAD v1.26 and several terrific routines for the electronic enthusiast

❑ ^ + **V1061 DISK UTLS** Several highly recommended programs for performing file hard drive backup. file recovery, disk track recovery, and forced disk validatuion

❑ ^ + **V1062 DESKTOP PUB** Transfers Macintosh screen fonts. AFM metric files to Amiga fonts/PPage metric files.

❑ ^ + **V1063 RIPPERS, STRIPPERS & BEATS** For the music enthusiast, design-ed to strip music from your favorite games

❑ ^ + **V1067 3D OBJECTS 3** About 20 objects in Sculpt / Turbosilver format

❑ ^ + **V1069 PRINTER DRIVERS 5** Desk-jet 550c, 500, 500c, Ricoh HP1200, Canon BJ300, 130, LPB, 10e, PJ1080a HP Paintjet

❑ ^ ^ **V1070 (AGA) UTLs 2** 256 colour icon editor, Plamsa256, QuickGrab v1.1

❑ ^ ^ **V1071 (AGA) MSM v1.8** Martins system monitor for programmers.

❑ ^ ^ **V1072 (AGA) WINBLENDER v39.28** Create excellent/stunning AGA fractals. Also contains 68030/040/FPU versions.

❑ ^ + **V1073 FT-X ACCOUNTS v2.01** Was written as there are not ready any other good account packages.

❑ ^ ^ **V1074 (AGA) UTLs 3** Collection of AGA Based utilities. Includes Kill AGA Which allows you to run old badly written programs including demos & some games.

❑ ^ * **V1077 GENEALOGIST v3.04** Is a specialized database for keeping track of genealogical information. Full featured & a wide selection of features to use.

❑ ^ + **V1078 PC TASK v2.03** Software IBM-PC emulator. It allows you to run the majority of PC software with no additional hardware. Now supports VGA, EGA, CGA and MDA. Full version £49.99 see below

❑ ^ + **V1079 KEYBOARD TRAINER v1.1** Best Public Domain Typing Tutor. An excellent New program / Amiga

❑ ^ + **V1081 REPAIR-IT 3** Contains a selection of Disk, Hard Drive repairing and file saving utilities for the Amiga.

❑ ^ + **V1083 CROSS v5.1** Is a program that creates crossword puzzles for you

❑ ^ + **V1084 SPECTRUM EMULATOR v1.7 (2)** This is the best & latest version of the most popular emulator for the Amiga. There is an 020/030 versions now on the disk which enhance the games on disk.

❑ ^ + **V1087 STOCK ANALYST** Technical analysis and securities tracking program which calculate when to buy & sell shares.

❑ ^ ^ **V1088 WB 2.0+ UTLS** Contains ChkFrag, DFC5, FastDas, Formatter, No-Click, UnDelete, KeyMac, MegaWB, MR, 1 Plane, OpenL, ResumeMaker & StarBlank.

❑ ^ ^ **V1090 ANDYS (AGA) UTLs** Another selection of utilities for A1200 owners also encludes FakeMem, KillAGA, AGATest, Degrader and much more.

❑ ^ + **V1091 ASTRONOMY v2.0** A menu driven astronomy program that cal-culatoes information about the Sun, Moon, Planets and Constellations. Help Disk.

❑ ^ + **V1092 HEROQUEST AID** Will aid solo AD&D players who do not have a Dungeon master at the present time. It takes over the DMs role. Good or what.

❑ ^ + **V1093 PARNET SET-UP (2)** A two way network file system between two parallel ports, establish via two amigas.

❑ ^ * **V1095 DEGRADERS** If you have trouble running software on an A1200 or A4000/030/040 give this disk a try it will emulate the basic 1.3 rom better that any other software on the Amiga at present.

❑ ^ + **V1096 MING SHU CHINESE ASTROLOGY** Will create a horoscope in seconds not hours. the complete aid.

❑ ^ + **V1097 TITANIC CHEATS v1.40** Contains 950k of raw data which is just a whisker under 600 games. Well presented

❑ ^ + **V1101 RJ UTLs** This disk contains helpful image processing and painting programs. Like Perfect Paint v1.34, Image Workshop v1.3, an IFF Manipulator.

❑ ! * **V1102 DT UTLs** Contains Border for WB v2.04+ machines, MakeKickfile, SKick v3.34, is a replacement for kick-it, ZKick and LKick kickers. It will softkick any other version of kickstart into ram.

❑ ^ + **V1103 TEK-ATAK MODULES** An excellent helping of wonderful music for your own productions or to listern to.

❑ ^ * **V1104 COLOURED ICONS** Transfer your disks into colouful well presented works of art with this database.

❑ ^ + **V1105 VIEW TOOLS** Contains Convert, ViewTree, a Familt tree easy to use database progra. ViewPhone, an Britsh telephone storage database. ViewDisk, is a small disk catalogue utility.

❑ ^ + **V1106 MAJOR LEAGUE** Allows you to keep track of your favorite teams and there results. Dataindex v2.4

❑ ^ + **V1109 STAR VIEW** Is designed to show graphicallythe positions of the stars and planets from any point on Earth.

❑ ^ + **V1110 FORCASTER v2.01b** Is a Horse Racing prediction program which uses statistical analysis of Major factors.

❑ ^ + **V1112 CHEQUE BOOK v2.5** Record your bank and other transactions.

❑ ^ + **V1114 PRINT LABELs** DocDump2.1, Envelope Print v1.2, Inlay Maker v1.4, MC master v1.1, Banner Press, Label Print v3.5

❑ ^ + **V1116 POOLS WIZARD JNR** Dead-acated Amiga Football Pools predicter.

❑ ^ + **V1117 x-BEAT v1.2** A good program for drum sequencing 16 bass.

❑ ^ * **V1121 SHAYERA'S TOOLS** Contains IFF2RAW, MatchRun, NoClick, PlayMelon, SetStar, TrackPlayer v1.92

❑ ^ + **V1123 DIGITAL DREAMS UTLs** Contains Trax, ProMax, trax Map, Titans cruncher, Protect, VC, Scrabble II, BootBlock Champ II and File Protect.

❑ ^ + **V1124 FIRST ALERT VIRUS** BootX, EVN v2.22, LVD v1.75, MVK v2.2, No Saddam, SnapShot, VC, Virus X, Virus Z.

❑ ^ + **V1125 LEMMINGS 2 INSTALL** This disk will install Lemmings 2 to your hard drive. 1Mb Chip RAM + 512k RAM.

❑ ^ + **V1129 RED DRAWF TRIVIA** The ultimate Quiz and answers game

❑ ^ + **V1130 COMMUNICATE v1.2** A helping tool for learning one of the eight formats of cummunications or languages.

❑ ^ + **V1131 COPPIERS UNLIMITED** AContains Maverick, copy only due to a new updated version oall the other copies have move disk.

❑ ^ + **V1133 NUMPAD v37.3** Emulates a numeric keypad on some Amiga Keys.

❑ ^ * **V1134 TOOLMANAGER v2.1 (2)** Includes the ability to add menus to your Tools menu. add WB icons or Windows.

❑ ^ * **V1136 DISK UTLs 2** Copy_C A tool for making backup copies, formatting ect. DiskMate A multi drivedisk copier. Disk Salv 2 Disk repair, salvage & undelete util. HDClick, HD menu & workbench tool.

❑ ^ ^ **V1137 (AGA) UTLs 4** Test, BBlank, CheckAGA, CycletoMenu, Doublex, Force VGA, GIF Datatype, PKLudge, PPShow, Rend24, ViewTek & Verlauf

❑ ^ ^ **V1138 (AGA) UTLs 5** Degrader, Pov-Ray, AmigaToDouble, CardMemLast, Palette, Promotor, RamTagMem.

❑ ^ ^ **V1139 (AGA) UTLs 6** A4091Patch, Alert Timer, Bestid, Clouds, Ham8 JPEG, NewPOP, NTSC4NTSC, PatchPointer, Plasma PCX & Screen Mode changer.

❑ ^ + **V1140 FOOTBALL FORECAST** This is the latest and most upto date football results prediction program.

❑ ^ + **V1141 MANDELPLOT v2.4** Doesn't just produce 2d fractals, can view them in 2d or 3d modes, make animations, even design your own fractals. Fastest mandel-brot producer 15 seconds on an A500).

❑ ^ + **V1144 GRAPHICS** Contains JPEG files, DJPEGGui v37.1, MakeAnim7, BestAGA anim playback, S-Anim-5 v1.1, S-PIC v1.2

❑ ^ + **V1145 MENUMASTER III** If you want to produce a simple menu system this is it wether for a hardsk or floppy disk

❑ ^ + **V1147 EASYBENCH** Contains a wide selection of utilities which covers almost all the best utilities on the Amiga **(2)**

❑ ^ + **V1152 GOLDED V.94 (2)** A GUI Based editor with lots of functions/options (about 250), DICE compiler front end, OS3 look & functions, folding paragraphs, fully customizable menus, Hotkeys, Autobackup, Insert columns, Clipboard, And more.

❑ ^ + **V1153 AMIGABASE v1.31** A programmable database, features include 2 display methods, filter datatypes, search, print, string, memo text, date, time, Data only limited by memory size.

❑ ^ + **V1154 MAGIC MENU V1.27** Replaces all intuition menus, supporting both pull-down and Pop-Up menus. Menus can be displayed in a 3d look.

❑ ^ + **V1155 PHXASS v3.3** A complete macro assembler which supports all important Motorola processors.

❑ ^ + **V1156 VIDEO TITLER** Can you generate professional looking TV titles and credits for you oun videos. Well you can with this, It has outstanding abilities like very smooth scrolling, colour Slides (AGA support) and use of colour fonts. Ideal for use with our Colour Fletcher fonts.

❑ ^ + **V1157 DINOWARP TRIVIA** You land suddenly & apear in front of a Dinosaur who agres to let you go if you answer 50 questions

❑ ^ + **V1158 BACK TO SCHOOL** Is a collection of the best Public Domain & shareware educational programs which will demonstrate to the youngest kid how to learn on the computer whill having fun. **(2)**

❑ ^ + **V1160 NOSTROMO CHEATS v1.1** The best adventure solution disk ever made with over 300 arcade cheats.

❑ ^ + **V1161 GOALKEEPER v1.0** Computer soccer administration program, Create your own Mini Football leagues upto eight teams, Fit for the European, UK leagues. or just use with Kick-Off 2.

❑ ^ ^ **V1164 ASI A1200 FIX DISK** Contains all what you would need for getting disks to work on your new a1200 computer.

❑ ^ + **V1174 SAMPLES UNLIMITED** A selection of instruments for all music programs like OctaMED, Sound Tracker.

❑ ^ + **V1175 UDM v3.0** Do you want to produce a utility disk of your own, well this disk will put you on the right track.

❑ ^ * **V1176 NO SAMPLER UTILITIES** Contains Hunter III, Fraxion Ripper, Sample Maker, R.I.P and loads more.

❑ ^ + **V1177 BETTERBENCH** Yes its another intresting Workbench utility disk packed 99% full of utilities and documents

❑ ^ + **V1178 KICKSTART 3 EMULATOR** This disk is a multi kickstart selection utility disk. You can select Kickstart 1.3(34.005) Kickstart machine (as it is) Kickstart 3.0 (39.106) No AGA picture support but you do have a superior Workbench ect.

❑ ^ + **V1179 FILE-O-FAX** Designed for you to work at your own leisure without worrying about forgetting those important meetings, or names, address, tel No's

❑ ^ + **V1184 AMIGA DIARY** Is a mouse driven diary capable of storing all persion events and is the solution to those forgotten birthdays, missed appointments ect.

❑ ^ + **V1185 GENIE** Is a new geneologist database which will keep track of info.

❑ ^ + **V1190 TECHNO MODULES 1-5** Yet another helping of RaveTechno music from the European map. Requires a tracker. **(5)**

❑ ^ + **V1196 DESKTOP VIDEO** Is a disk with making and editing your very own video master pieces. Contains excellent software

❑ ^ + **V1197 LOCKPIC v2.0** This has a wide selection of titles which it can backup for save keeping.

❑ ^ + **V1200 MAGIC WORKBENCH** Is a selection of icons or items to enhance your Workbench screen and enivorments.

❑ ^ + **V1207 OCTASTUFF** A new collection of utilites come samples come modules for use with the famous OctaMED programs.

❑ ^ + **V1208 OCTAROCK** A selection of rock orientated modules and samples (OctaMED)

❑ ^ + **V1213 PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE** This contains the Programming languages like, Ace, AmigaE, AmigaEdo, SBProlog, BCPL4AMI, EGLI, Pascal and others **(3)**

## GAME DISKS

❑ ! - **1073 TETRIS ORIGINAL** This is the closest game to the original tetris.

❑ ^ + **1420 DTRIS** If you want a1 or 2 player Tetris this has to be 1 of them.

❑ ^ + **1749 SCRAMBLE** Original that old classic game from the arcades.

❑ ^ + **1977 POM POM GUNNER** Shoot down world war II airplanes in this Operation Wolf style type game.

❑ ! - **2018 JETMAN** Spectrum classic converted to the amiga with all the original sounds.

❑ ^ + **2022 SEA LANCE** The first Silent Service type sub war game on PD

❑ ^ + **2054 ATIC ATAC** A rendition of the game from the original Spectrum

❑ ^ + **2164 DUNGEON ON NADROJ** This is the best D&D adventure type game.

❑ ^ + **2220 STRATEGIC GAMES** Eternal Rome, Lords of Hosts, In Moonshine.

❑ ^ + **2221 MIND GAMES 21** of the best games to challenge your mind

❑ ^ + **2272 BLACK JACK LAB** Play all the popular versions of Pontoon

❑ ^ + **2278 CARD SHARP** Professionally presented selection of solitaire games.

❑ ^ + **2280 DIPLOMACY** Classic strategy game loosely based on World War 1. 2Mb

❑ ^ + **2411 TOTAL WAR** Strategy world conquest type game. 1 or more players.

❑ ^ + **2432 GOLDEN OLDIES** Galaga, Galaxian, Space invaders, Asteriods, Batty & Missle Command

❑ ^ +> **2447 COINDROP** Fruit Machine simulator with various gamble modes.

❑ ! - **2448 CRAZY SUE** Another first rate cute school girl platform game.

❑ ^ +> **2480 FRUIT MACHINE 2** As near as poss to the Arcade machines

❑ ^ + **2485 IRON CLADS** Strategic War Game which is heavy on your mind **(2)**

❑ ^ + **2491 LEGEND OF LOTHIAN v1.02** Excellent adv game in the vein of Ultima

❑ ^ + **2498 AMOS CRICKET** Excellent arcade cricket simulator with nice graphic

❑ ^ + **2614 TETREN** Is a 1 or 2 player Tetris. The 2 player game is Head 2 Head.

❑ ^ + **2617 GOLDEN OLDIES 2:** Croak, is a 1 or 2 player Frogger. BPlanes is 1 of the most addiitive games we've played here. Trail-Blazer, as the C64 Classic. Scamble.

❑ ^ + **2620 DR MARIO** You must move coloured pills down the screen, 3 in a row

❑ ^ + **2621 ETERNAL ROME** Start the Roman Empire from 32BC. Build fleets, armies & attack

❑ ^ + **2622 DONKEY KONG** Platform game in which you must rescue the girl

❑ ^ + **2676 MORIA v5.4** Loads of new features, better graphics, larger, graphics, dungeons, screen updates, overview of dungon's map, more monsters ect.

❑ ^ + **2710 CLASH OF THE EMPIRES (2) v2.1** Strategical War game By T.A.Sear

❑ ^ + **2724 NEIGHBOURS** Is the best graphical adventure game to date **(2)**

❑ ! + **2738 AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL** Try to guide upto 100 planes into the AirPort

❑ ^ + **2775 ROULETE ROYAL** Why not do some gamble with chips at the casio

❑ ! + **2802 CARD-O-RAMA** Sea heven, Crib Klondike, Black-jack, Spades, Street

❑ ^ + **2825 ALL ROUNDER** A Cricket simulation with great graphics & play

❑ ^ + **2842 CRAZY SUE II** Sequal to the all time best selling PD platform game.

❑ ^ + **2854 SPACE INVADERS II** A revised old classic Space Invaders game

❑ ^ + **2863 FIGHTING WARRIORS** A karate combat fighting contest game.

❑ ^ + **2932 NUMERIX** Enjoy puzzles / Tetris then this is a must. You have a scrabble board & you must place tetris blocks to get points.

❑ ^ + **2941 EXTREME VIOLENCE** Scrolls around much bigger than Smash TV

❑ ^ + **2987 BOMB JACKY** A conversion as the original Bomb Jack, it's as the best

❑ ^ * **2988 BALDERS GROVE** Its here Boulder dash with a selection of levels that work fully on Workbench 2. or higher

❑ ^ ^ **3023 UCHESS (AGA)** Do you love chess then try this. 4Mb & WB 3.0

❑ ^ + **3037 SSW** A game for 2 based on Space Wars but with many extra features.

❑ ^ + **3038 TANK HUNTER** A 2 player Tank Attack game with various levels.

❑ ^ + **3039 ASTEROIDS II v0.85** The best version of Asteroids i have ever seen, If you like Asteroids then this is for you.

❑ ^ ^ **3040 TETRIS (AGA)** If you like tetris, you need this disk. AGA graphics.

❑ ^ + **3075 18 HOLE GOLF (2)** The first excellent golf game Theres fully selectable speed & power functions combined with surpub graphics top a great game.

❑ ^ + **3162 SON OF BLAGGER** This is a classic C64 platform conversion Can you remember how active it is to play

❑ ^ + **3214 UNIV CONQ** A strategy game where 2 human players battle for control of the universe. Status information is continually updated to allow the player to concentrate on strategy, digitized pictures

❑ ^ + **3234 SYSTEM DEFENDER** If Defender is the game and this is the game for you, in true defender style it retains all features.

❑^ + **3235 ALIEN BASH** The game is set inside a prison for the galaxys mentally unstable, you have been imprisoned there along with a bunch of your mates. Rescue your friends by shooting

❑ ^+ **3237 SKIDMARKS** Racing game in which you skid around a nice track to win.

❑ ^ + **3252 BONDMINE 12** A well produced game in the vain of the classic Boulder Dash games.

❑ ^ + **3253 OPERATION METEOR** Set in 3d graphics in which you must travel around in a stunning adventure.

❑ ^ - **3257 SUITCASE (2)** The best adventure on the amiga to date. Excellent

❑ ^ + **3265 WIBBLE WORLD GIGGY** Wibble World of Giggis Mainia hits town Yes you can enjoy the frills of controling an egg shaped character for free. Solve puzzles avoid the monsters

❑ ^ + **3269 BRAINBOW** is an original board game, which will have you taxing your brains for hours. Rather like a version of the pile-up Scrabble

❑ ^ + **3280 STRIKEBALL** Is a version of baseball with a few rule changes.

❑ ^ + **3283 NECESSARY ROUGHNESS (2)** Puts you in charge of a team of your choise and lets you play a computer team, again of your choise. As headcoach you will have to call the playsthat you think will be most effective to the game. You will then be ableto see the action, followed by a breif summary of what you have just seen.

❑ ^ + **3285 THE ENTITY v1.1** You play the role or I should say control the stix and you're beinginvaided by the Entity.

❑ ^ + **3286 AIR HOCKEY** Is a bat and ball game based on air hockey from the amusement aracdes. 2 players.

❑ ^ * **3287 ROAD TO HELL (2Mb)** Is an overhead view driving game like HotRod and super sprint. It requires skill and coordination for success. The aim of the aim of the game is towin the gold in the Championship by making more money that your opponent. Theres a helping extra which can be bought from the shop like enhancedtypes, Better Engines, Rockets, Smoke screens act.

❑ ^ + **3310 STARBASE 13 (2)** Is a graphical adventure, simular in style to monkey island or Operation Stealth. The controls and what they do are fairly obvious.

❑ ^ + **3370 DIGITAL TETRIS** Is a One or two player Tetris game with neat graphics

❑ ^ + **3371 SUPER PRIX** This is the closest variant game of Super Sprint on the Amiga

❑ ^ + **3383 POPEYE** Is one of my old favs from the C64 computer. Very playable.

❑ ^ + **3384 BLOAD RUNNER** Remember that old classic game well here it is.

❑ ^ + **3397 SPACE INVASION** Another convertsion of Space Invaiders.

❑ ^ + **3401 JETTY QUEST** This game is a cross between Gilbert and Block it with makes it an excellently addictive puzzle game.

❑ ^ + **3411 KINGDOMS AT WAR** This is a 1 to 4 player Risk type game with neat and colourful graphics and presentation.

❑ ^ + **3412 THE LAST REFUGE** Is a Space Invaiders variant set in the middle ages.

❑ ^ + **3413 DARKSTAFF** Is another classic game this one from the spectrum world

❑ ^ + **3414 CONQUEST & DOMINATION** An excellent straregy war game in which you can battle with troops, Tanks, Guns, Planes, Bombers, Battle ships. Replace ammo, trains, tankers, Build buildings ect.

❑ ^ + **3428 CLASSIC TERIS GAMES** For all you out there with a fetish for Tetris games heres a little selection to keep you happy.

❑ ^ + **3434 MR MEN OLYMPICS** Heres a fast action joystick waggling game for all true Olympians or just crazzed Mr Men. **(2)**

❑ ^ ^ **3436 (AGA) MOTOROLA INVAIDERS** Its just another excellent AGA very large graphics space invaider type game. **(2)**

❑ ^ + **3465 ROBOULDIX** Is a action puzzle game with 32 colour graphics, over 500 different objects, and is a variant on the most excellent arcade classic BoulderDash.

## STAR TREK SELECTION

❑ ^ + .... **AT05 KLINGON D7 CRUISER** fires torpedoes while passing by **NCC-1864**

❑ ^ + .... **AT10 ENTERPRICES** Leaves the Star station dock. **NCC 1701-A** classic original

❑ ^ + .... **AT22 APPROACHING VESSELS**

❑ ^ + .... **AT23 STAR TREK FLEET MANEUVER**

❑ ^ + .... **AT33 THE PROBE II & BIRD OF PREY**

❑ ^ + .... **AT34 LEAVING SPACE OFFICE** Docking, Attack mode, Bird of Prey Scout attacking

❑ ^ + .... **1060 STAR TREK *: TNG** Game

❑ ^ + .... **1081 ULTIMATE STAR TREK (2)** Game by Tobias Richter. Now in English.

❑ ^ + .... **2222 STAR TREK TNG** This is the latest quiz game based on the T.N.G **(2)**

❑ ! - .... **2501 STARTREK** / Jimbo Barber **(2) 2dd**

❑ ^ + .... **2503 STARTREK** Eric Gustafson **(3) 2dd**

❑ ^ + .... **2926 STAR TREK THEMES! (2)** The original sampled version of the Star Trek themes.

❑ ^ + .... **2879 CULT TV II (2)** This volume features 6 more cult shows from the 60s & early 70s include complete Episode Guides, indepth

❑ ^ + .... **3108 STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE 9**

❑ ^ ^ .... **3386 (AGA) STAR WARS SLIDESHOW**

❑ ^^ .... **3420 (AGA) STAR WARS SLIDES (5)**

❑ ^ + .... **3453 THE NEW STAR TREK ANIM (2)**

**Star Trek / Wars Video Tape**

❑ 25Min long Tobias Richter 24bit ray traced animation which took 6 weeks to produce. (VHS Format) £11.99

## LATEST DEMO DISKS

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❑ ^+ 3418 .......... HAM AIR PLANE PICTURES
❑ ^+ 3417 .......... SUPERHAM 001
❑ ^+ 3416 .......... CHILDREN FAVOURITES
❑ ^+ 3415 .......... STREAT FIGHTER II VIOLENCE DEMO
❑ ^^ 3410 .......... (AGA) CROM MEGA DEMO
❑ ^+ 3409 .......... BLOCKBUSTERS
❑ ^+ 3405 .......... LAST STAND ON HOTH (4)
❑ ^^ 3403 .......... (AGA) SUBLIMINAL XTC RAVE (2)
❑ ^+ 3389 .......... RAGE MEGA DEMO
❑ ^+ 3388 .......... EXTENSION MEGA DEMO
❑ ^+ 3374 .......... AKIRA PICTURES 2
❑ ^+ 3373 .......... SCHEGEGGI COMIC STRIP
❑ ^^ 3372 .......... (AGA) TEAM HOIS AGA DEMO II
❑ ^+ 3366 .......... SOME DEMO / LEMON
❑ ! + 3338 .......... AQUARIUM MEGA DEMO
❑ ^+ 3334 .......... FAIRLIGHT RAVE DEMO
❑ ^+ 3290 .......... GRAPEVINE 16 (3) £4.00
❑ ^^ 3212 .......... (AGA) NIGHT BREED SLIDES (2)
❑ ^+ 3136 .......... KEFRENS DESERT DREAM (2)
❑ ^+ 3198 .......... GNU RAVE TECHNO DEMO (4)
❑ ^+ 3139 .......... SCOOPEX 2 UNLIMITED (2)
❑ ^^ 3063 .......... (AGA) HOIS MEGA DEMO
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DISK BOXES ❑ 40 £5.49 ❑ 80 £8.99

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### CODE NUMBERS

| | |
|---|---|
| + | Works with Workbench 2.0 |
| * | Workbench 2.0+ Only |
| ^ | Works with Workbench 3.0 |
| ^^ | Workbench 3.0+ Only |
| > | Not A600 Machines |
| ! | Not Workbench 3.0 |
| (?) | Requires (?) Amount of disks |

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# Take a wider

**IDEK MF-5017 and MF-5021A Hi-res AGA compatible monitors**
**Supplier: IDEK Iiyama**
**Phone: 0438 745482**
**Price: £725 and £1,225 respectively**

## Relieve some of that eye-strain with a 17-incher or its 21-inch big brother...

Ever since the arrival of Workbench 2 and its new Productivity modes, the high-end monitor market has really blossomed. Now thanks to emergence of the A1200 and 4000, more and more people are becoming desperate to exploit the myriad of new screen modes and colour combinations on offer from the AGA.

As AGA users will be all too aware, simply plugging in a PC-style monitor doesn't necessarily ensure success. In fact AGA machines require monitors which will sync down to 15.5kHz – thereby allowing access to games software and the machines boot config screen.

As a result either a bi-sync, quad-sync or better still a multi-sync monitor is essential – and invariably more expensive than its bog standard PC counterpart.

To say that the necessity for precise monitor specs has cause a little confusion would be something of an understatement – however things have improved with the release of the Commodore 1942 bi-sync which offers AGA compatibility along with a reasonable asking price.

However the 1942 still doesn't support all the available modes, and form a design point it's slightly limited by its 14in screen. Enter the IDEK duo at a whooping 17 and 21 inches respectively.

As you've probably spotted, neither monitor offers the cheapest monitoring solution for the Amiga but to be fair monitors of this screen size are invariably meant for high end applications. Although fairly pricey in Amiga terms, both models are at present retailing at a much reduced price tag specifically to capture some of the Amiga market.

When contacting for more information on either monitor be sure to stress that you are an Amiga owner – only then can you buy them at the prices listed above.

If you do not mention your Amiga affiliation you'll be quoted the normal retail price of £1,054 for the MF-5017 and £1,764 for the MF-5021A.

Starting with the larger of the two models, namely the MF-5021A, there's a mixture of good and bad news. On the plus side is the truly huge and almost completely flat 21in screen.

Alas, along with the huge dimensions comes a slightly disappointing 0.31 dot pitch – a figure which real terms means a very



slight fuzziness to the overall image when running in higher screen resolutions. Although not exactly a plus for CAD-style applications the relatively high dot pitch has no effect on the area in which the 5021 is best suited, namely presentation.

Unfortunately, for day to day use it wouldn't be my first

## Christmas plus Frames & Borders

**Bit-mapped mono clip art**
**Supplier: Artworks**
**Phone: 0469 588138**
**Price: £7.99 per disk**

When it comes to clip art, the Amiga is fairly well blessed with a seemingly endless supply of disks crowding the quarter page advertisements around the PD pages.

As a result, the prospect of forking out almost £8 on a commercial alternative may seem a tad unnecessary.

However like anything else you have to invest for a quality product, and that's exactly what's on offer from Artworks – a company that's already responsible for a library of 12 disks that have been widely accepted as the best bit-mapped clip art available for the Amiga.

Like the Multimedia CD-ROM mentioned earlier, both Artwork disks are well constructed with accompanying posters showing all the clips at a glance. The disks themselves also assist selection via auto-booting slideshows which run through the entire contents of the disk.

The only real limitation of the collection is the strictly bitmapped file format which means scaling does degrade image quality. Having said that, it must be stressed that both disks contain probably the highest quality images I've yet encountered.

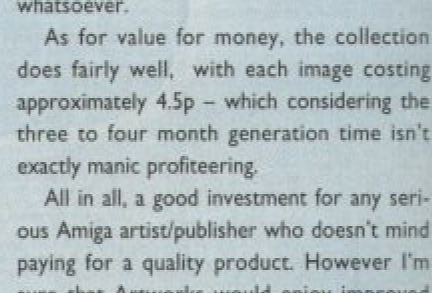
As you've probably spotted, the titles leave little to the imagination with the Christmas disk providing the usual array of Yuletide classics such a showmen, snowflakes, crackers and decorations, all itching to play a part in the silly season as festive newsletters, faxes, flyers and so on.



As for Frames & Borders, usage may not be as obvious, but if you're looking for a means to glamorise your letter heads or perhaps improve the impact of general DTP the disk provides a very useful library of bolt-on extras which work well in concert with the aforementioned Christmas disk, adding a little sobriety to the it potentially tacky tinsel-town exploits.

In addition to DTP, both disks could also play a part in desktop video as the bitmapped design means importation into paint packages or presentation systems such as Scala couldn't be simpler.

For the purists the disks also have the added bonus of originality as Artworks insist that all their images are original



creations with no preliminary scanning whatsoever.

As for value for money, the collection does fairly well, with each image costing approximately 4.5p – which considering the three to four month generation time isn't exactly manic profiteering.

All in all, a good investment for any serious Amiga artist/publisher who doesn't mind paying for a quality product. However I'm sure that Artworks would enjoy improved sales if their collection was on offer as more than just bitmaps.

Each disk contains 15, 640 x 512 hi-res mono pages accommodating between four and ten individual images per page.

# r veiw

choice, not only because of the dot pitch but also its rather annoying dislike for multitasking which means that flipping between programs results in dramatic pin cushioning effects, demanding repeated screen adjustment to maintain an optimum display.

Moving on to the MF-5017, and the outlook is brighter. Like its larger counterpart, IDEK's 17in alternative is a true multi-sync which will happily go down to the essential 15.5kHz.

Fortunately, unlike its big brother the 5017 has no pin cushioning problems when flipping screens. Unfortunately, however, the dot pitch remains the same at 0.31 – but it must be stressed the fuzziness apparent on the 21in model appears all but gone on the smaller 17in screen.

On the control side the smaller model does lack some of the finer points on offer from its brother such as degauss, the PCC or pin cushion control, and no RRC or raster rotation control.

The degauss feature simple de-magnetises the tube by sending a charge which removes any latent magnetism that could be degrading the picture.

PCC simply allows adjustment of the vertical distortion which can occur when hopping between screens, while RRC ensures the image is square in relation to the screen.

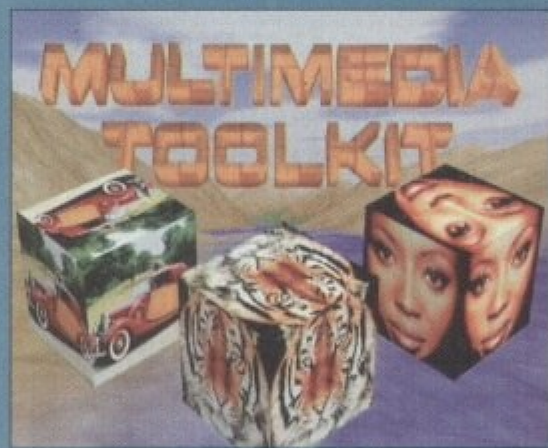
Although I've delivered a fairly harsh account, both models still remain a reasonable investment – especially considering the discount. However, if you're serious about dramatically improving your display, adding an RTG or retargetable graphics card such as Picasso or Piccolo in addition to an IDEK is a very wise move.

● *For more information on IDEK and RTG combinations contact Micro-Pace UK Ltd on: 0753 551 888*



## Multimedia Toolkit

*Multimedia CD-ROM for CD32 and CDTV*
*Supplier: Weird Science*
*Phone: 0533 340682*
*Price: £19.95*




*the CD Toolkit is very well presented*

It's been a long, long, time since I've experienced even the slightest excitement at the prospect of reviewing a CD-ROM. However with the arrival of the Multimedia Toolkit, apathy is now a thing of the past.

After just a few minutes with the aforesaid CD even the most hard-bitten hack would be transformed into a quivering mass of expectation as the seemingly endless supply of graphics and sounds spew forth from the 600Mb of this impressive multimedia library.

It's not only the number of files but also the variety and overall quality of the collection that impress. To put things into perspective, the disc contains over 10,000 files which break down into 500 original 24-bit images with both Ham8 and HAM interlace variations, over 1,308 examples of coloured clip art, another 2,139 in mono – and let's not forget the 214 icons.

Fonts also play a part with 195 standard fonts, 120 colour fonts, another 107 Adobe fonts, 80 PostScript, 79 Compugraphic and 93 examples of scalable clip art. On the sound side, 750 tracker modules await plus 2,300 samples covering every noise and instrument imaginable.

With so many files and such diversity, accessibility has to be given serious consideration. Thankfully in the case of CD Toolkit any file is only a few mouse clicks away thanks to an option and requester selection system that makes data retrieval a doddle.

As you'd expect, each category of file has its own directory structure which is navigated in the usual mousy manner. When a specific file is located it can be auditioned by a double mouse click or via a selection of view, hear and play buttons on the left of the requester.

As for compatibility, again there's little to complain about with the CD operating on both CDTV and CD32 in addition to limited access via a PC CD-ROM drive.

With the expansion options such as floppies, hard disks and keyboards yet to appear for the CD32 it remains fairly useless for the existing CD32 user base – however when the promised add-ons appear it will be an essential part of any system capable of CD support.

As you're probably aware, CD32 technology is promised for the entire range, but alas it's very unlike to appear before spring 1994. However, when the inevitable happens any serious Amiga user involved in either video, DTP or general multimedia would be mad to miss out on this truly excellent produce.




*Handy slideshow utilities...*



*...and attractive slides*

# Disk Expander

*Disk doubler automatic data compression system for hard and floppy disks*
*Supplier: Micro-PACE UK*
*Phone: 0753 551888*
*Price: £39.95*

So-called "disk doubling" is a technique the PC world has taken on board since the release of DRDOS 6.0 which offered it as standard, and one which has become increasingly common.

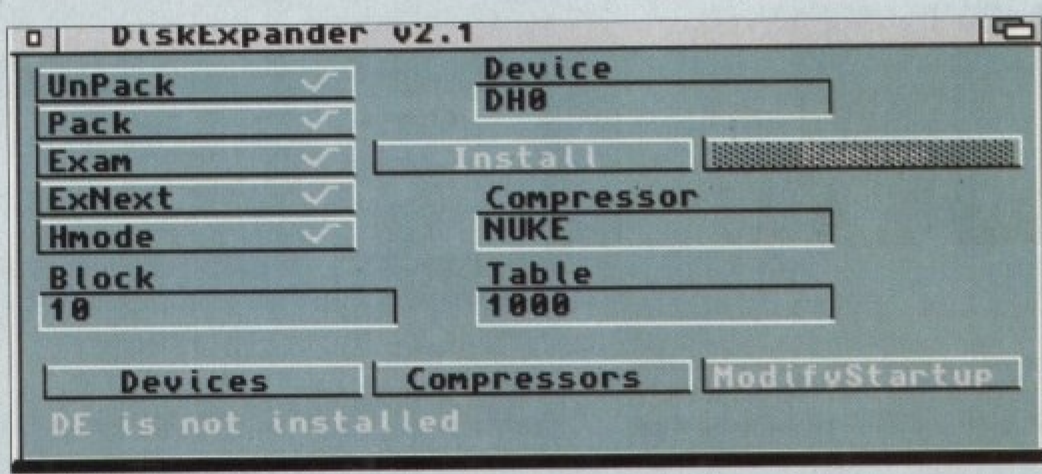
The technology of automatically compressing and decompressing data whenever a drive is written to or read from makes for the most effective use of storage space, and if used correctly can in effect increase the size of a hard drive.

The PC world has acted as a large test lab for disk doubling to the extent that the algorithms used in compression have all been thoroughly tried and tested. Many, notably the LZ routines, have cropped up in packer programs such as PowerPacker and Imploder, both of which have superb levels of reliability.

Amiga users should therefore feel relatively comfortable with the idea of a hard drive consisting in part or in whole of crunched and compressed data, but the idea of automatic compression is still one which causes a few nervous twitches.

For some reason, we all start getting jumpy and expecting files to be garbled or corrupted just because the Amiga is doing the compressing in the background.

In reality, how many of us have packed a program, then found that the crunched file no longer runs? This has never happened in the history of *Amiga Computing* CoverDisks despite the fact that we have always made extensive use of crunchers and archivers, so there is no reason why the same compression routines should work any less reliably when utilised by a disk doubler.




*Options galore to control the compression process*

Disk Expander is the first commercial Amiga disk doubler and as such it has a lot of ground breaking to do. Supplied as a single disk and manual, the program is a modest collection of three utilities and a collection of libraries offering a variety of compression formats.

Users must install the program before it can be run, at which point the initialisation process writes to the original disk, which makes this one of the only productivity releases ever to feature limited on-disk copy protection.

Installation can be to hard or floppy disk drive, and in the latter case Disk Expander will compress the target floppy until there's enough space for itself, so it is possible to install to an already full Workbench disk.

Most users of Disk Expander, though, will want to make the most of a hard drive which may have seemed huge when first purchased but which has since begun to creak under the strain, and the program's simple approach should make this an easy task. The central utility – Disk Expander itself – is activated from Workbench (although there is a CLI option) and can be started either as the first line in a startup-sequence or once the machine has booted.

When run, a number of options are available to customise the way in which data is compressed or to choose the default drives for compression.

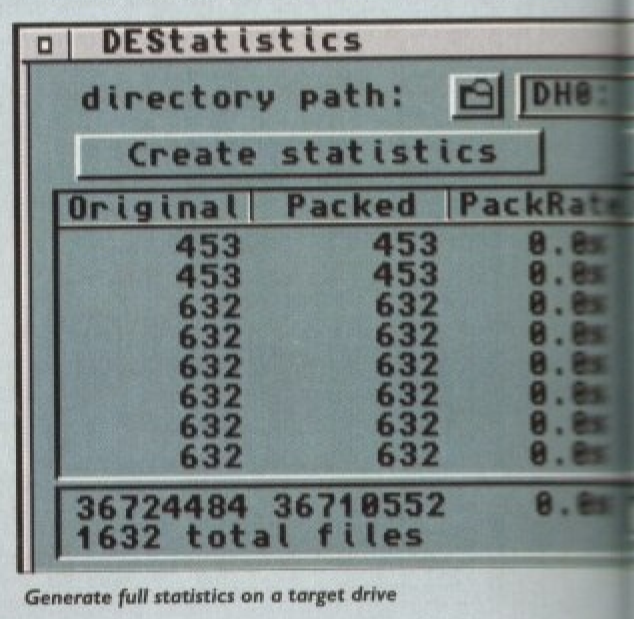
Entire devices can be selected and their contents processed, or individual drawers can be targeted for squashing. For instance, users with huge directories full of 24-bit files, sound samples, or other space-gobbling data can choose just to target the most bulging parts of their hard drives.

There is a limit to flexibility, as automatic compression/decompression works only on proper devices, and will not work with a directory which has been made into a logical device using the assign command, so for selective doubling the user must resort to the Device Packer program.

This utility can crunch all the data presently in a directory, thus saving acres of space, and so long as Disk Expander is running in the background the files can be accessed as normal.

Several parameters available through Disk Expander's front end give the user full control over this sort of operation. Each device can be set to pack, unpack, or both, and switch between the way a directory is displayed.

To avoid confusion, files can also be shown by the DIR




*Generate full statistics on a target drive*

# A1200 Insider Guide

*Beginner's guide to the A1200*
*Supplier: Bruce Smith Books*
*Phone: 0923 894355*
*Price: £14.95*

The latest *Amiga Insider Guide*, its publishers claim, is the best selling Amiga handbook ever, and though we have no way of checking this claim there is no doubt that this is the most popular A1200 guide presently on the shelves.

Reasons for this aren't difficult to find, and a quick glance through the book's 24 chapters should be enough for most users to pluck it from the book case.

Starting from the point of view of a completely new owner and aiming consistently at practical advice and projects, the book takes the uninitiated from explanations about what Workbench is through simple copy commands, to script editing. Along the way, users are introduced to icon editing and creation, icon tool types, most Workbench functions and prefs settings, printers, and printer setup.

There are several good illustrations, using screen grabs, to walk readers through tricky subjects such as installing a new printer driver, and so on.

Fonts, commodities, CrossDos, and multitasking are also covered, giving the book enough subjects that it should continue to be useful after a first reading.

There are places in which the subject matter could be better covered or treated in a more in-depth fashion, and one or two places where you are left wishing there had been more to a particular chapter, but overall the *A1200 Insider Guide* should be a useful and enlightening first book for all A1200 owners.

command or file requesters using their original file sizes, an option which is highly recommended.

When copying a file from a packed device to an unpacked device, such as when copying an image from hard drive to floppy, Disk Expander unpacks the file and saves the original to the other device. If the user can't at first see how big the original was, he or she might become more than a little confused.

Setting a device to unpack but not pack files is useful if a few directories require crunching but the user is reluctant to apply this to the entire drive or partition. In this way, Device Packer can be used to process and crunch the directory's contents from time to time when it starts to fill again with new unpacked files.

Access times for crunched data are understandably a little slower, but most users will be pleasantly surprised at how little Disk Expander impinges on system operation.

Using the default installation procedure and the default compression library gives a decompression rate of 613k per second on a 25MHz 68030 machine, a rate which will drop quite a bit on the A1200 or A500.

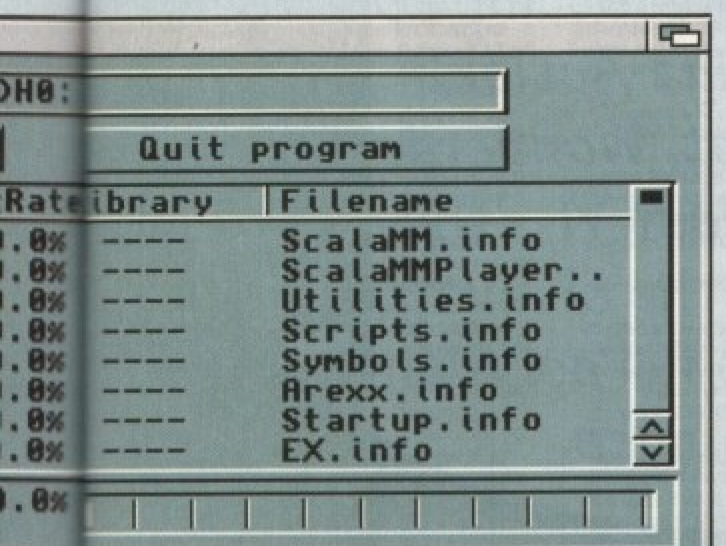
Even in the worst cases, though, decompression will never be so slow as to make the system unusable, and on faster machines Disk Expander is more or less unnoticeable.

The various optional compression techniques, in particular the FAST library, give the user a choice of whether to go for more speed or more compression, so an optimum set-up can always be achieved.

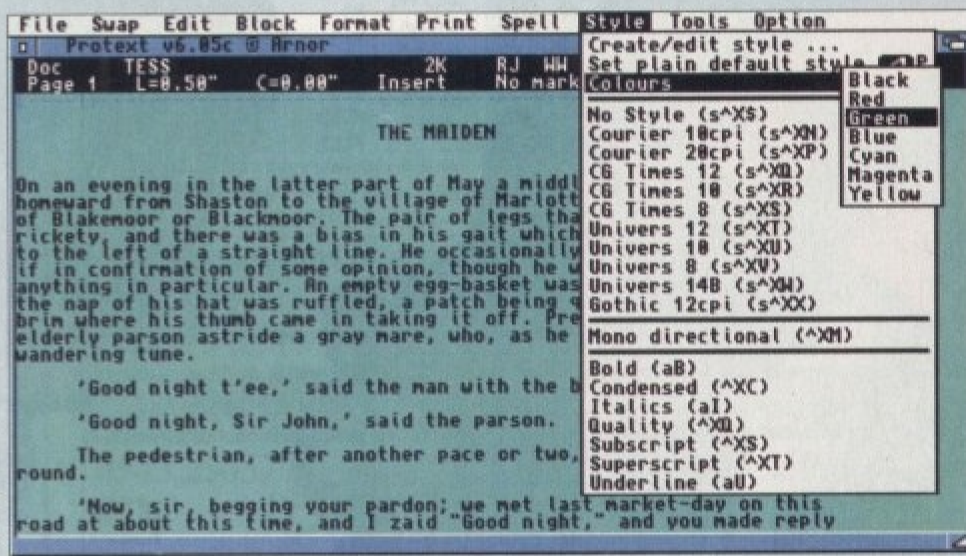
FAST compression results in about 22 per cent space savings as opposed to NUKE's 33 per cent, but when you consider that this might be 20 to 40Mb on a larger drive many users would settle for the faster-but-less-compressed approach.

The FAST library is being developed further as we go to press, and the program can utilise any new XPK libraries developed by shareware authors, so Disk Expander should if anything work more effectively as new libraries are released

Given its simple interface, fast, efficient compression, and use of proven techniques, Disk Expander is highly recommended to any user with rapidly diminishing storage space – and that's most of us.




# Protext 6.0 preview




*All-new support for outline fonts is a big plus*

**Word processor with major features update**
**Supplier: Arnor Ltd**
**Phone: 0733 68909**
**Price: £99 (introductory offer)**

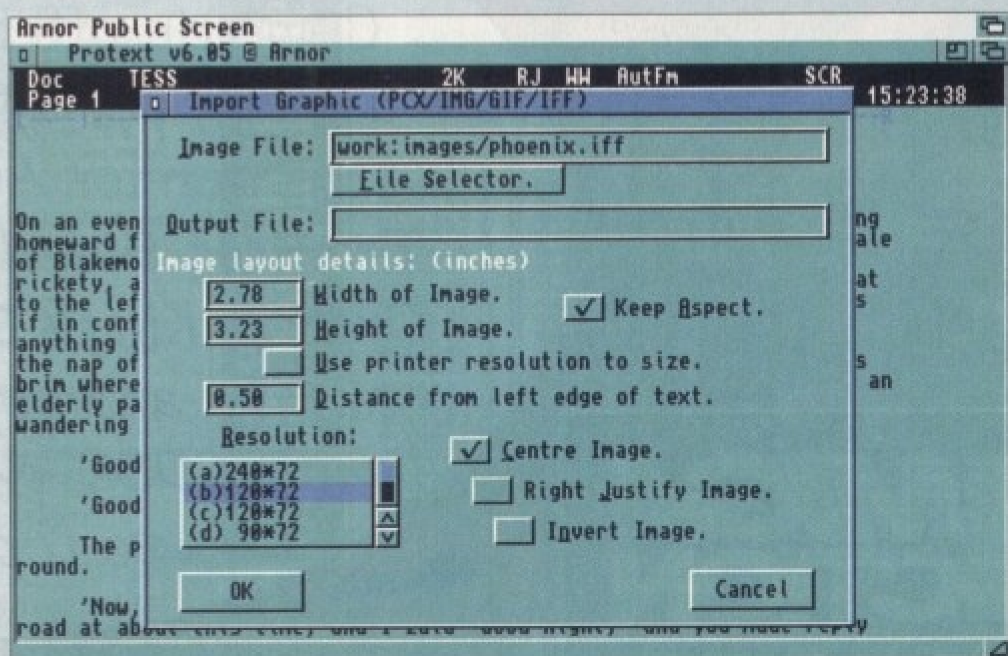
Having been lost in the wilderness for a year or so now and shouldered rudely to one side by its glossier competition, the old faithful of the Amiga word processing market is about to restake its claim to the title of Most Powerful Word Processor, with the release of v6.0.

All the old power features have been retained, and instead of taking the tempting and obvious step to a wysiwyg display, Arnor have added a list of modern features to match those offered by the likes of Wordworth and Final Writer. PostScript printing support, a new macro editor, and support for scalable fonts all make their debut alongside a host of others.

The new glossary feature, dictionary editor and colour printing will improve both the program's productivity and output, and a new Workbench 2.0 interface makes for much better visuals.

Most modern of all, and one of the glaring omissions from v5.5, is the style tag feature. Using this, authors of large documents (meat and drink for a program such as Protext) can change massive sections or the entire document simply by applying a new style.

In all, the list of features now integral to Protext means that though still a non-wysiwyg word processor, it should be right back on top of the raw power charts. Look out for a full review next month.




*Graphic import was always one of Protext's biggest omissions*

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# HARD TIMES

## With Christmas almost upon us, Hard Times takes the pain out of investing in a hard disk

One of the biggest misconceptions about hard disks in general is that they will in some way transform your machine from an old friend into a total stranger set to scotch any attempt at usability.

On the hand there's the naïve belief that a hard disk is just another name for an all-singing, all-dancing automated answer to everything.

In fact if approached from the right or wrong angle both arguments hold water. The angle in question being your level of understanding of how a hard disk operates, a factor which could mean the difference between bliss and misery.

In effect a hard disk is simply a very big, very fast, floppy. If you can keep this concept in mind managing the beast is a whole lot easier. For example a hard disk has to have all the basic elements the Amiga expects to find on a floppy.

If the machine can't find essentials such as C:, S:, Libs: and so on, you'll be lucky if it will even boot-up never mind run its installed software.

All the system essential directories must be resident in the root directory of the system disk – just as they are when a floppy boots the machine – thereby assuming the role of a floppy system disk.

### SYSTEM DISK

Whenever the machine is turned on with a hard disk installed and no floppy present, the hard disk immediately becomes the system disk, and as a result the machine will attempt to boot from it and from then on will look to it for all the files asked for either by you or your software.

The point is that you must be able to manage your hard disk properly by making sure that what the Amiga requires is available and in the right place. For this reason alone a directory manager is essential.

Fortunately there's a lot of choice in this area with several programs in the public domain plus the odd commercial alternative. Notable PD programs including TDM and SID2 – both of which have been on past *AC* CoverDisks – while the commercial offerings include Directory Opus and Directory Manager.

For the beginner a PD program should be more than enough as it simply makes the process of copying, moving and managing files much easier. If however you feel confident enough to handle the process via the CLI/Shell, feel free.

In addition to file management it's essential you become comfortable with the AmigaDOS assign command as it's often invaluable to anyone using a hard disk.

Assuming you've decided to take the plunge, what's next? Should you go for a SCSI or an IDE? Do you have a choice, and if so what's the difference? Well although a slightly complex subject, these are the basics. If you own a machine that runs on Workbench 2 or below you have the choice between IDE and SCSI, the essential difference being that SCSI devices are generally a little faster and more expandable, while IDEs are usually a little cheaper. For the average user the difference in speed is barely noticeable, especially if you've just upgraded from a floppy system. The thing to bear in mind is that speed in relation to hard disks is totally different to what you're use to.

For example, in floppy terms speed is usually gauged in minutes or seconds, while hard disks are compared in milliseconds.

In simple terms this means that software loaded on an IDE drive will take longer to load in relation to the average SCSI with the effect increasing when writing to the disk.

For example DPaint may take 2 to 3 seconds longer to load on an IDE. Obviously this is a very rough guide but it does illustrate the difference in relative speed between the two formats.

On the expansion side an IDE will support a maximum of two drives from one controller while SCSI stretches up to seven. In addition, a SCSI controller will also accommodate other media such as scanners, tape streamers, opticals and laser disks – unlike IDE which is strictly limited to hard disk control.

Although a real advantage to serious users, the speed and flexibility of the SCSI standard is not really an issue for the average punter. After all, can you see yourself lashing out for a single extra drive, never mind six?

Before handing over any cash, here's a list of essential questions you should put to your supplier.

First and foremost ask whether the unit is IDE or SCSI. If the unit is an IDE ask if the drive – minus the controller card – would fit into either an A600 or A1200. This is worth knowing even if you're planning to use the drive externally on a older machine because if you decide to upgrade later on you won't necessarily need to invest in a new drive.

When buying an A500/500 Plus external drive ask if memory can be added to the drive, and if so, can the machine still use this additional RAM when the hard disk is turned off?

If the drive you want operates without a power supply, enquire if there is an option to add a power supply if necessary. This may be essential if you plan to use the drive with additional peripherals as the strain on the machine's internal power may be too much.

### EXPANSION

In the same vein, ask if the drive offers a DMA pass-through. If not it will be impossible to use additional DMA devices such as scanners or RAM expansions unless they offer a DMA through option allowing the drive to be appended to them.

If you opt for a SCSI device and wish to take advantage of its daisy-chaining potential, ensure that the drive has a SCSI thru-port. If not, you won't be able to expand later on unless you buy another controller card.

Remember to ask about the speed of the drive. Query the drives access time in milliseconds. The fastest drives run at about 11 milliseconds with 17 being the norm for IDEs – anything above 20 is pretty sluggish.

If you're planning to buy a second-hand unit, make sure that the original formatting and prep software comes as part of the deal. If disaster strikes and you're forced to re-format your drive, finding appropriate software can be very difficult, especially on older models.

The same applies to a new drive. If the drive comes pre-formatted you must insist on a copy of the prep software.

Finally when buying a drive make sure you have at least 2Mb of memory in total. As Commodore found out to their cost with the A600HD, 1Mb machines fitted with a hard disk won't run some 1Mb games simply because a certain amount of RAM is required to boot the hard disk and Workbench, as a result many 1Mb games were rendered useless.



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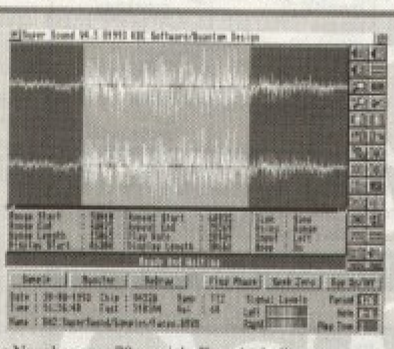
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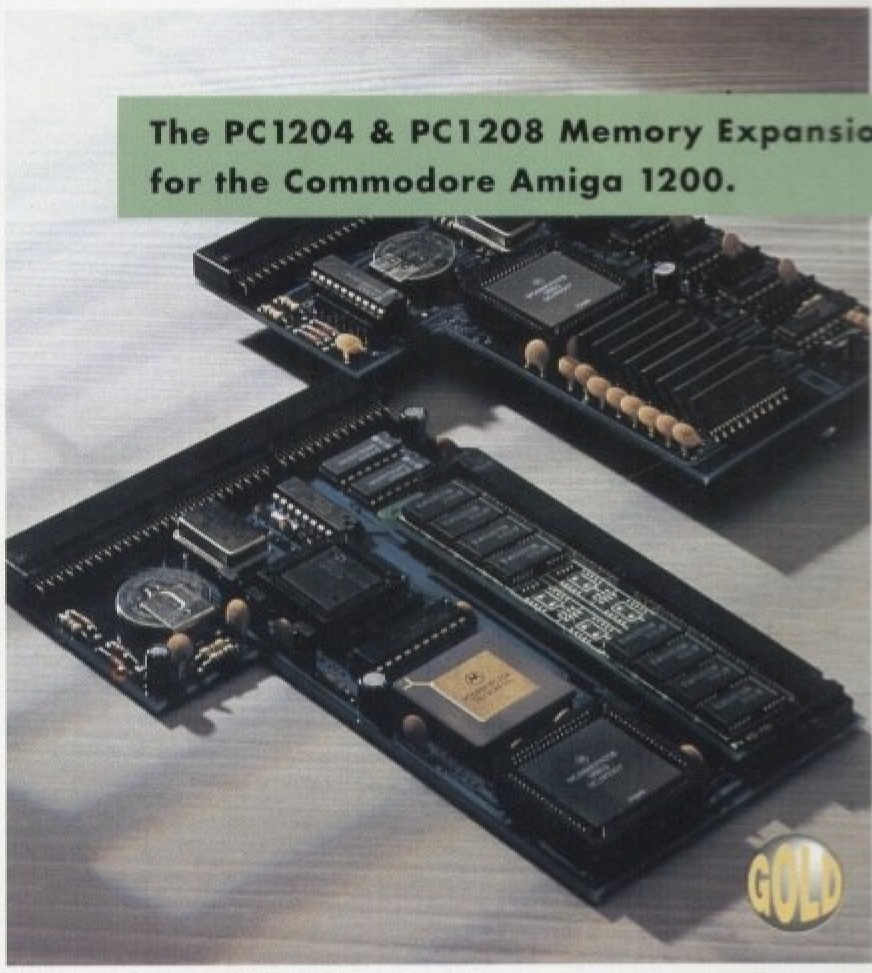
| | |
|---|---|
| PC1208 + 68881 20Mhz | £139.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 20MHz | £159.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 33MHz | £199.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 40MHz | £225.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 50MHz | £265.95 |

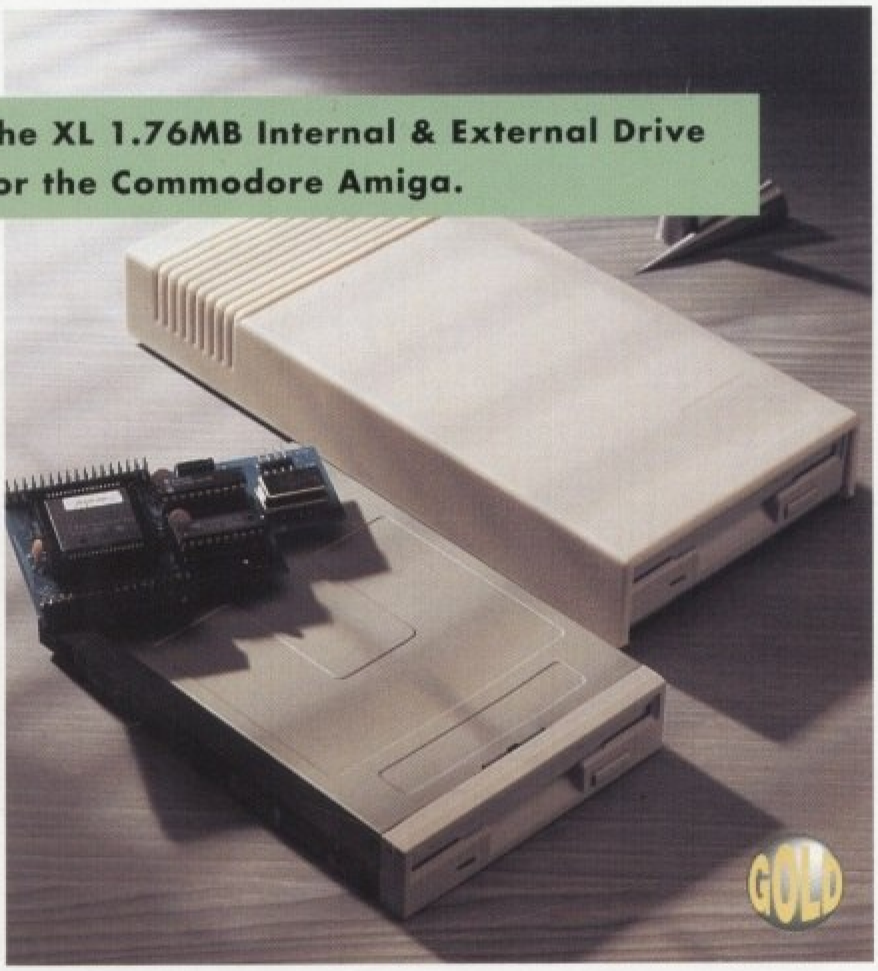
**PC1208 with 4MB**

| | |
|---|---|
| PC1208 + 68881 20Mhz | £240.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 20MHz | £269.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 33MHz | £285.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 40MHz | £305.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 50MHz | £347.95 |

**PC1208 with 8MB**

| | |
|---|---|
| PC1208 + 68881 20Mhz | £419.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 20MHz | £439.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 33MHz | £465.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 40MHz | £489.95 |
| PC1208 + 68882 50MHz | £530.95 |




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